Intolerable tolerance
Laura Smit discovers tension ... p. 9

War-time story
A Dutch girl's brave mission .. p. 10

Remembrance Day articles
Authors remember .... pp. 12, 13, 20

CHRISTIAN COURIER
A Reformed Weekly

REDEEMER COLLEGE LIBRARY
CHRISTIAN COURIER NOV 10 1997
PER/BX/9401/.C36

53rd Year of | November 7, 1997 | No. 2552 $1.07

Federal MP admonishes churches for silence

Margaret Dinsdale

VANCOUVER — It was the end of a speech to the House of Commons standing committee on finance in Vancouver on Oct. 15, setting the tone for a series of pre-budget public consultations across the country.

The tape recorders and video cameras were turned off and getting packed up. At that point most people in the room were not paying attention, but federal finance minister Paul Martin kept talking.

"Some see the discussion ahead as a financial debate only. It's not," he said. "It's a debate about values."

It wasn't printed in any of the papers and it didn't make the supper-time news, but some people heard it. And one in particular isn't going to let Martin forget it.

In fact, Gerald Vandezande, public affairs director for Citizens for Public Justice, put the statement on the front cover of his presentation package for a round-table meeting of the same committee in Toronto on Oct. 20.

"The finance minister made a commendable start with his speech in Vancouver, that we need to think about the kind of values that should shape this country," Vandezande said to the committee. "But what values will this standing committee put forward to parliament, to the prime minister, to the finance minister?" he asked. "Are you going to tell them that we want a new vision, a new kind of life together?"

Crisis of values

And that vision, according to Vandezande, is one of social and economic justice for all citizens, starting with an overhauled income tax structure and refundable tax credit.

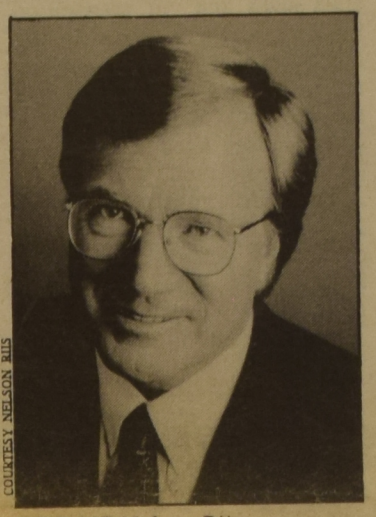
"We are having what constitutes a fundamental crisis of values as to how we think about the future of our country and about the way we live together," he said. "It's about the way we treat children, poor people and families, and the unemployed."

But Vandezande was careful to not lay the blame at the door of any one political party.

"Child care, poverty, unemployment, these are national non-partisan issues that require non-partisan solutions," he said.

One federal MP was willing to listen to Vandezande and the other presenters, but he also created a bit of a stir when he lobbed some of their complaints right back into their own court.

During the questioning by members, Nelson Riis, NDP MP for Kamloops, B.C., asked why child care issues had "fallen off the table" in terms of media attention. Some saw that as startling in itself. But more surprising, Riis continued, asserting that churches have been silent in protesting against social service cutbacks.



COURTESY NELSON RIIS

NDP MP Nelson Riis

In an interview after the meeting, Riis elaborated on his largely rhetorical questions. He himself is a Baptist from a social gospel background.

Institutional child abuse

"I think it is shocking and disillusioning that churches are standing by, quietly and passively, while massive ethical and moral downshifts are occurring in our public policies," Riis said.

"Look at what we're doing to children. It's an institutionalized form of child abuse," he said. "It's simply unconscionable that the thousands of churches there are in this country are mute instead of speaking out against the cruelest of public policies, the

See **RELIGIOUS** *page 2...*

Christian public school teachers support strike

ALAN DOERKSEN

Kelly Morgan-Rauh (second from left) and other teachers protest outside of Memorial School in St. Catharines.

Alan Doerksen

ST. CATHARINES, Ont. — Many Christians were among the public school teachers who left their jobs last week to protest Bill 160, the Ontario government's planned reform to the education system. Despite the fact that the strike was illegal, many Christian teachers felt they were justified in taking part in the protest.

"I would never walk out of my classroom over wages," insisted Kelly Morgan-Rauh, a Grade 4 music teacher at Memorial School, in St. Catharines, Ont. "I love my job and I want this to be resolved."

For her, the main issue was what she viewed as the government's bid to take control away from local schools and school boards. "This bill allows Mike Harris and his cabinet to make decisions privately," said Morgan-Rauh, who carried a placard which read: "Bill 160 gives Mike Harris and his cabinet dictatorship over all education policy. Demand your right to democracy!"

More teamwork needed

She wants to see more teamwork between teachers and the government. Morgan-Rauh also feels the government has a "hidden agenda" to take away education dollars to fund tax cuts.

Morgan-Rauh justifies the strike saying, "I have a legally negotiated contract that this government breaks." She is a member of Pelham Centre United Church and has shared her concerns with her minister. She asked him for prayer and he offered to pray for the dispute to be resolved but would not take one side or the other.

"I am hoping and praying that everything will be resolved," said Morgan-Rauh. She is hopeful Bill 160 will be revised, just as a previous education law, Bill 136, was revised when teachers objected to parts of it. But she is not impressed with the job Education Minister David Johnson is doing because she believes he is not co-operative enough with teachers.

Many Roman Catholic teachers also protested Bill 160. Among them was Louise Minniti, vice-principal of Canadian Martyrs School. She objected to the words "strike," explaining, "We're calling it a protest."

Minniti insisted, "Morally and ethically, this is something we have to do. We don't have an alternative way of telling the public. This alerts the public to the cause."

She asserts that the Ontario Conference of Catholic Bishops (OCCB) has given its support to the striking teachers.

See **BISHOPS** *page 2...*

********** BDL L9KXXX - POS **FL9:3
LIBRARY REDEEMER COLLEGE
777 HWY #53 EAST Dec 97
ANCASTER, ON
L9K 1J4

News

Bishops voice support for teachers

... continued from page 1

In an Oct. 23 press release, the bishops voiced their qualified support for teachers on strike. On behalf of the bishops, the Most Rev. A. F. Tonnos, Bishop of Hamilton and President of OCCB stated: "We do not feel it appropriate to comment on the details of issues in dispute. We recognize that the government must be in charge of overall educational policy for the province. However, we observe an Ontario which is diverse in many aspects and where it is not prudent to assume that one measure will fit all circumstances. We would hope that in managing their disagreement, both sides would realize that as much space should be left for local communities to make decisions which affect the lives of children, parents and teachers as it is possible to allow. Local solutions, which have been customary in Ontario, are normally highly satisfactory.

"When all other avenues are exhausted and individuals are convinced that their cause is just, Catholic social teaching supports their right to strike and requires just treatment for them. We urge both sides in the current disagreement to settle their differences in a way which achieves reforms and does justice to children, families and teachers."

The key issues for Minniti are the government's plans to cap class sizes and cut preparation time for teachers. She's hoping an agreement will soon be reached between teachers and the province and believes that compromises need to be made on both sides.

The Harris government wants to limit class size to 25 in elementary schools and 22 in high schools. What the Ontario government is really after, says John Vanasselt of the Ontario Alliance of Christian Schools, is that they don't want the teachers' union to use an increased class size as a bargaining chip to increase teachers' salaries, as has been done in the past. "That's a good position to take on the part of the government," he says.

ALAN DOERKSEN

Christian teachers Heather Delle Monache (second from left) and Albino Pereira (right) joined the protest at Eden Secondary School .

Regarding the government's proposal to reduce secondary teachers' preparation time, as it stands now each teacher usually has 75 minutes of prep time per day, which is significantly higher than the national average (about 30 minutes). The government wants to reduce prep time in Ontario by 30 per cent.

Teresa Salvatori, an occasional (supply) teacher at Canadian Martyrs School, says the key issue of the strike for her is: "in a nutshell, we want control." Money is not an issue for her in this strike.

Salvatori is concerned that Bill 160 will allow uncertified teachers into the classroom, something that could threaten the jobs of certified teachers like herself. She is also concerned that the government plans to take much money out of the school system, which could affect young teachers, in particular. Salvatori feels that Mike Harris (who used to be a teacher himself) and his government do not understand the needs of teachers and should visit schools and watch teachers at work in order to understand them better. She feels teachers have plenty of reasons to be on strike.

Many parents and some students have stopped by to voice their support for striking teachers, says Salvatori. "We've had tons of parents come by to drop off donuts and coffee."

Soul-searching

Several Christian teachers at Eden Secondary School were also on strike. Eden used to be an independent Christian school and is now an "alternative school" within the public school system. Cynthia Scott, a special education teacher at Eden who attends a United church had no moral qualms about being on strike. "It's not illegal to me," she said. "I think the government has already taken action that nullifies the contract we had." But she adds, "For us, there was a lot of soul-searching, individually and collectively. It was difficult for us [to go on strike.]"

She notes that local United Church ministers met together during the strike "and the concern expressed in prayers was for wisdom on behalf of both parties."

Democratic option

"We care for our kids," said Albino Pereira, a physical education teacher at Eden who attends a Mennonite Brethren church. "Sometimes we have to stand up morally for what is right — to let [the government] know what our voice is. That's what democracy's all about."

Outlining her concerns, Scott said, "We see that a third party [the government] has nullified the contract we have. This is a third-party intervention into a legally-negotiated collective-bargaining situation." Scott is especially concerned that Bill 160 will allow the use of unqualified teachers in schools.

Scott believes the government wanted teachers to go on strike so that it could gain public support for Bill 160. "It's a political agenda for them and a financial goal, achieved in one place by taking [money] out of the educational system," insisted Scott."

What recourse?

Heather Delle Monache, a design and technology teacher at Eden who is Catholic, feels the strike was a necessary step to take. "What are our recourses? This is the only way we could see to get our point across after the letter-writing campaigns and faxing campaigns. It's been going on for a very long time. It's not just a sudden thing."

Delle Monache admits many parents are concerned about their kids not being able to go to school. But she says, "It's very important to realize that a short-term inconvenience based on your child's entire educational life is a small sacrifice to make. Other than the inconvenience that this is causing some parents, I can't see that any real harm has been done."

Religious leaders should speak up for poor, children, says MP

... continued from page 1

abandonment of people in need."

Bankers and other business leaders were perceived by the presenters as getting their way with the current Ontario and federal governments and Riis offered an insight.

"The business groups are at every meeting, they are lobbying at every opportunity to give the impression to political decision makers that their concerns are a major priority," he said. "And because of this they, in fact, become a major priority."

The fact that businesses have the means and resources to exert this pressure doesn't mean that the marginalized need not be heard, according to Riis.

"I appreciate that the poor are voiceless, that children obviously have no place around the tables of parliament," he said.

So it is the religious leaders, says Riis, who should be speaking on their behalf.

Beggars 100 yards from parliament

"I can't help but think that if Jesus were walking around our streets today, he would find it appalling and embarrassing that we have beggars on every street corner in the nation's capital, within 100 yards of parliament," he said.

"When I attend marches and rallies against poverty and violence against women and children," he continued, "most notably absent are the churches, with a few exceptions. And they are always the same few exceptions."

So just what was said when Nelson Riis asked his questions about child care and churches during the session?

"I think the reason child care fell off the table is because social justice fell off the table," Vandezande replied. "The Liberals abandoned their values, contrary to the first Red Book. The one value that remained was fiscal deficit reduction."

"When I walked here this morning there was a man sleeping outside of City Hall," he said. "I think this committee might want to interview this man. In his sleeping bag. And the projections are that tens of thousands of people will be sleeping in the streets of Toronto this winter because of the failure of the [Ontario] Harris government. But it's our communal failure if we don't politically rise up and say that we can no longer in good faith and with a clear conscience accept this kind of degradation of humanity."

Vandezande looked at the reputation Canada has internationally as well.

"We can do all the good work internationally on land mines but our reputation as a beacon of hope hangs in the balance," he said. "For the sake of our national identity and future, we need to *do* something. We want to support Mr. Martin's remarks last year and twice again this year, in his contention that these scandalous gaps between the very rich and the poor must be abandoned."

AMSTERDAM
Christmas Charter via
Martinair Holland
The other Dutch airline
Dec. 23-Jan. 6
$639 adult/$599 senior
KLM SUPER SALE
Note: Booking/Payment deadline is November 21.
$539
Valid Nov. 21-Feb. 28
Blackout Dec. 15-23 and Jan. 2-9, min. 7 days/ max. 21 day stay.
Weekend fare is $599.
VERSTRAETE
Travel & Cruises
Toronto line (416) 969-8100
Toll Free Canada 1-800-565-9267
St. Catharines (905) 934-4414
Henny Vuyk (905) 934-0666

London church program cooks with developmentally challenged

PHOTOS COURTESY DEB ROUKEMA

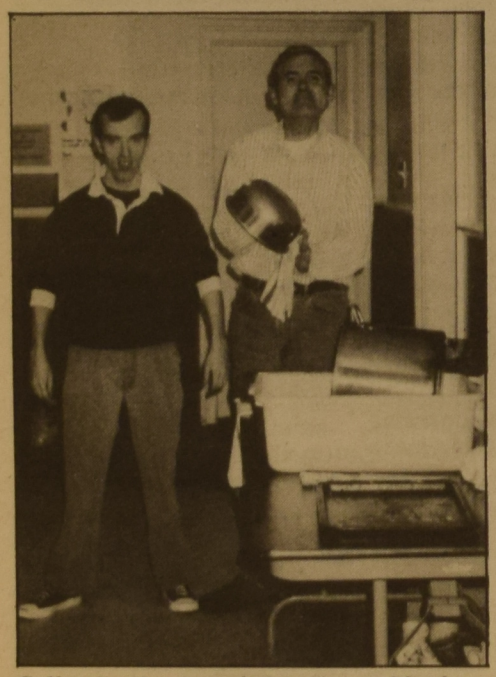
Steven, a client of First CRC London's collective kitchen, stirs things up.

Alan Doerksen

LONDON, Ont. — In the past few years, community or collective kitchens have become an effective way for refugees, low-income families and others to manage economically, make friends and improve their nutrition. Collective kitchens are often set up at churches and offer their members the opportunity of pooling resources and encouraging each other.

Now a church in London, Ont., is running a collective kitchen with a different focus: helping developmentally challenged people. Deb Roukema runs the collective kitchen at London's First Christian Reformed Church. The program began one Friday a month, is expanding to biweekly, and Roukema hopes to expand it further to weekly.

In Roukema's regular job, she also works with developmentally challenged people, in the Support Independent Living Program which helps its clients live on their own in London. That's one reason for the collective kitchen's focus. Friday is her day off, which allows her time to run the program.



Collective kitchen dishwashers: Matthew (l.) and Jim

About 20 developmentally challenged clients take part in the collective kitchen, says Roukema. "Most of them live in the downtown community; they all live independently."

Roukema sees the program as helpful in several ways. "These people need help with food budgeting," she says. They also need "an educational tool to help them cook nutritionally from scratch."

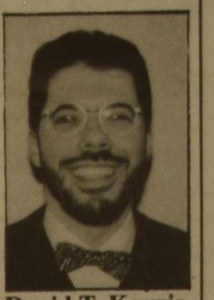
Ten or 12 volunteers from the church help Roukema. Together with clients, they prepare a lunch and eat it together at the church. They also prepare extra food which is divided up and taken home by clients.

The church offers its kitchen as a location for the program and deacons provide some of the money necessary for the food. Clients also chip in, paying about $10 per visit to the collective kitchen.

Roukema is pleased with the response from clients. "The folks are so appreciative and cheerful. They're very proud of themselves." She is aware of other community kitchens in London, but none with the same focus as her church's program.

The new crusaders

Principalities & Powers



David T. Koyzis

Forty years ago, U.S. President Dwight Eisenhower sent federal troops to Little Rock, Arkansas, to enforce a court-ordered desegregation of the public schools. This was one of the early volleys in the struggle to gain civil rights for American blacks.

Although much remains to be done to improve interracial relations, the struggle was largely successful insofar as blacks won a hard fought recognition of their legal equality, and insofar as long-standing beliefs in racial superiority fell into widespread disfavor in the U.S. and elsewhere.

The civil rights issue was one of a very few in which the lines between good and evil seemed particularly clear. Blacks had a right to be judged, in the words of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., not by the color of their skin, but by the content of their character. Those who treated them otherwise were obviously in the wrong.

Enemies of righteousness

Yet while the legacy of the civil rights struggle has been an undoubted blessing for blacks and nonblacks alike, its legacy for ordinary politics has been mixed. For it effectively imported the language of the crusade into the mundane policy-making process, where it does not really fit.

In most political controversies the lines are never drawn as starkly as they are in a crusade, where the temptation is for the contestants on each side to portray each other as enemies of righteousness rather than as fellow citizens with potentially legitimate claims deserving justice.

Typical of the crusade mentality is the protest march. The historic march on Washington in 1963 was an unprecedented event marking a watershed in the quest for racial justice. Since then, however, such marches have become a nearly permanent feature of the North American political landscape.

This has effectively cheapened the currency of the protest march which, far from being an extraordinary show of force commanding public attention, is nowadays likely to be ignored for being too commonplace.

Furthermore, the protest march has always signalled a certain breakdown in communication. To be sure, protesting is a form of communicating one's grievances, but those engaging in it are no longer willing to listen to the other side. What was once considered an infrequently used, last-resort tactic in the ongoing attempt to settle differences has in many respects taken on routine status. Thus we have seen the regrettable normalization of the unusual — the too easy acceptance of "talking at" rather than "talking with" opponents. Our politics as a whole have become less civil as a result.

Advocates of "gay rights" have thus sought to portray their adversaries as "homophobic," a term improperly placed in the same category as "racist." Similarly, opponents of "gay rights" view their own cause as a crusade to defend the traditional family against its perceived antagonists. Both sides view the other as malevolent and thus unworthy of being heard.

Here in Canada our British tradition of one-party governments based on artificial majorities already makes for needlessly adversarial politics. Canadians traditionally shied away from crusades. But we've increasingly adopted our American neighbors' crusade mentality; and the "rights talk" that often goes with it further threatens civility.

The battle for civil rights was worth fighting, and there may well be others that will have to be fought for the sake of advancing basic human goods. But all battles have casualties, if only in the deteriorating tone of a country's politics. We should choose our battles carefully and wisely, and we should refrain from turning every political issue into a crusade.

David T. Koyzis teaches political science at Redeemer College, Ancaster, Ont.

Investment Stewardship Program

A joint venture of the Ontario Alliance of Christian Schools and Bick Financial Security Corporation

An Investment Program with a Bonus

By investing with Bick Financial you:

- meet your financial objectives
- support your local Christian school
- fund Christian curriculum development

Contact: Leonard Bick

BICK FINANCIAL SECURITY CORPORATION

241 Wilson Street East, Ancaster, Ontario L9G 2B8

(905) 648-9559 or 888-777-2425 (888-RSP-BICK)

Editorial

Have you invested your 'self' in the stock market?

The last week of October sent shudders through the international stock markets as well as shivers through those who had invested heavily in public stocks. At the end of the week, the decline in stocks proved to be a mere correction of a too bullish market. But before that, when the figures in the Hong Kong exchange crept close to a 15 per cent decline, people were getting worried.

I must admit that I know little about the stock market, other than that it is a huge system of investment and divestment, and that somehow our whole economic structure is built on this human invention. Some say the stock market is driven by greed in good times and by fear in bad times.

That sounds like an exaggeration to me. I would like to believe that responsible citizens see the stock market as a positive system that allows small operations to expand and that enables investors to make modest gains as they provide for themselves and their families. Not everyone is motivated by greed and fear.

At the same time, I suspect that greed is not far from investors as they see quicker ways of making money. In their eagerness to make a quick buck, they may not pay attention to where their money is invested. Are they investing in heavy polluters, in companies that oppress Third World people or produce worthless products? In other words, are they in the stock market just to make money, regardless of the ill effects of their investment? Those who are propelled by greed tend also to be those who experience the greatest fear when their fortunes take a nose-dive.

A friend of mine maintains that the degree of risk is proportionately related to the degree of profit. The higher the return that is promised on an investment, the greater the risk. This kind of investment turns the stock market into a lottery. The more modest the gains, the less the risk. He believes that taking a certain amount of risk is not bad. Life is full of risks. But our risks should be calculated and not excessive, he says.

And so he advises people to invest in blue chip stocks and to avoid get-rich-quick schemes. He does not panic when the market undergoes a melt-down. As long as the economy is basically sound, his stocks will rise again to where they should be, he believes.

Uncertainty and seeming chaos

The stock market is a fascinating device that allows us to go beyond the family business that produces simple items to large corporations that provide the facilities to produce intricate and costly products like jet engines and computers. But looking at the actual workings of an exchange suggests that this thing is chaotic and hard to control. Every day, at least on paper, billions of dollars flow through the market as investors constantly look for better ways to make their money work for them. Every day the market indexes show fluctuations in the value of stock. Every day there are winners and losers.

Once in a while stocks rise to a point where financial experts will tell you they should not be. Predictions of the need to correct the values may send investors into a selling spree, and occasionally this selling spree results in a general panic which sends stocks down to the basement.

If you have money invested in the market, you can lose big, especially if you decide to join the panicking crowd and sell out. Otherwise, those who hold on or who have no money in stocks, other than what pension plans and banks do for them, have little to fear. I can see that a market crash would send the whole economy into confusion and produce lots of unemployment. Nobody would escape such a disaster. But what does a temporary meltdown mean to most of us? If confidence is restored, the whole thing may register as a blip on the screen of our lives.

There's always a lesson

But we can profit from this temporary threat to our welfare. We can examine the motives that propel our economic practices. We may ask ourselves, for example, what our view of the future is. How do we prepare for that future? Do we lay up treasures on earth to the point that we think we have covered all angles? Are we like the foolish rich man in one of Jesus' parables who thought that his retirement was guaranteed to be a comfortable one? His stupidity came out when he died the next night. "This is how it will be with anyone who stores up things for himself but is not rich toward God" (Luke 12:21).

We can learn from this feeling of economic uncertainty that we cannot and should not put our faith in the economy. We should heed the words of Scripture: "Now listen, you who say, 'Today or tomorrow we will go to this or that city, spend a year there carrying on business and make money.' Why, you do not even know what will happen tomorrow. What is your life? You are a mist that appears for a little while and then vanishes. Instead, you ought to say, 'If it is the Lord's will, we will live and do this or that" (James 4:13-15).

Investing in the stock market should be driven by the desire to do the Lords will, and when things go bad, we should trust the Lord. Our business is his business if we do it in his name and to his glory.

Life is more than the economy

We are called to be people of the day — of today! We should not be tomorrow people. We may make plans for tomorrow, but always in a way that says, "Give us this day our daily bread, not, tomorrow's bread." Like the Israelites in the desert, we have to learn that God provides manna one day at a time.

There will be times when we are afraid. The more we have invested in the economy, the more we are emotionally attached. That's understandable. As long as we are not spiritually attached. A person's life does not consist in the abundance of his or her shares. Life is more than the stock market, and a happy retirement is more than mutual funds. You cannot serve God and Mammon.

If you serve Mammon through your stocks, your shares *in God's Kingdom will crash*. And you have reason to fear *now*. But if you trust in God, and if you get for yourselves purses that won't fall apart, investing wisely and stewardly in worthwhile companies, no Hong Kong decline can touch you. **BW**

Christian Courier

Formerly known as Calvinist Contact
Founded in 1945

An independent weekly that seeks to:
- ***report on significant events in the Christian community and the world;***
- ***express opinions infused by Scripture and rooted in a Reformed perspective;***
- ***provide contact for the Christian community.***

CHRISTIAN COURIER STAFF

Editor: Bert Witvoet **Publisher:** Stan de Jong
Associate Editor: Marian Van Til Staff **Reporter and Layout:** Alan Doerksen **Circulation Manager and Proofreading:** Grace Bowman
Advertising, Typesetting and Layout: Ingrid Torn

REGIONAL REPORTERS:

Jeff Hoogendoorn, Victoria; James Kwantes, Vancouver; Cindy Bruin, Calgary; Gordon Legge, Calgary; Jane Ouwehand, Agassiz, B.C.; Jessie Schut, Edmonton; Valerie Walker, Halifax; Robert VanderVennen, Toronto

EDITORIAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Wendy Saunders, Margaret Griffioen-Drenth, Doug Roorda, Harry der Nederlanden, Erick Schuringa, Nelly Westerhoff.

The publication of comments, opinions or advertising does not imply agreement or endorsement by *Christian Courier* or the publisher. Please contact the publisher if you cannot afford the subscription price but want to receive *Christian Courier.*

Christian Courier
4-261 Martindale Rd/. St. Catharines, ON, L2W 1A1
Tel: (905) 682-8311;
Fax: (905) 682-8313;
E-mail: cceditor@aol.com

Our goal should be to advance the Kingdom

I wish to commend you for some recent excellent editorials. Your editorial "Let the sun shine on all committed couples?", however, cannot go unchallenged. In this editorial, you indicate your support for CPJ's position of encouraging the government to recognize homosexual relationships with the legal status of domestic partners. You support CPJ's premise that "in a pluralistic society Christians have no right to impose their values and beliefs on others" and that "governments have to promote fair and equal access to rights and opportunities for all citizens."

On the surface these arguments appear sound. Who among us desire the advancement of discrimination and prejudice? On further scrutiny, however, these arguments reveal a logical inconsistency that needs to be discerned.

Law is moral

If you accept the premise that all of life is religion, then you will agree that all law is moral in nature. If all law is moral in nature and if it is the duty of the government to enact laws, then you will also agree that it is impossible for the government to do anything that is not moral in nature. To state that the government in a pluralistic society has no right to impose Christian values on others is to also state that the government has no right to impose any values on anyone. What you are really suggesting, then, is that the government is to operate as a morally neutral adjudicator in a morally diverse society. This is simply impossible.

You also implicitly appeal to the model of sphere sovereignty. This model would not support the role for government that you suggest. The essence of sphere sovereignty is that all spheres, including government, derive their authority and moral normativity from Christ. Christ is the central unity that holds society together in harmonious order.

It is an idolatrous society that rejects Christ and turns inward to self-service. In such a society, government authority and moral normativity are derived only from the citizen. Given the diversity of citizens, moral neutrality becomes necessary. Since achieving moral neutrality is impossible, a society rooted in self-service will devolve into fractious squabbling over rights and power.

We recognize our society to be an idolatrous, self-serving society. If the sphere sovereignty model compels us in any way, it should be to direct us to seek the restoration of the centrality of Christ in the ordering of our society and in the making of our laws. We should be striving for a restructuring of our society according to the biblically inspired concepts of justice, fairness, equality and rights. Conversely, we should be directed to discern the non-biblical, self-serving meaning that our society is giving to these concepts and the manner in which these redefined concepts are shaping our society and contemporary law. If we do, we will see that CPJ's proposed domestic partnership law is rooted more in the morality of self-service than it is in Christian morality.

Given, then, that all law is moral in nature, the question that we must really ask is not *if* it is appropriate for us to seek and enact legislation that is morally Christian, but how should we go about doing this? We can begin to appreciate how this is to be done if we remember that Christianity is about more than just behaving in a certain way; it is also about being like Christ in character when we act. It is legitimate, therefore, for us to set as our goal a society ordered by righteous laws if we are characterized by meekness, humility, patience, perseverance, and forebearance while trying to achieve this goal.

Society must be ready

An equally important question to ask is, *when* is it appropriate to enact morally Christian legislation? Society, in reality, has no qualms about enacting laws that are overtly moral in nature, despite its claims of moral neutrality. A prime example of this is current legislation restricting smoking behavior. Why is it, then, that society is quite willing to restrict one behavior but not another? The answer lies in appreciating that society on a conscience level has come to understand that smoking is evil.

My point here is that seeking the enactment of legislation to restrict behavior is a plausible goal if we are mindful of where society is at on a conscience level. On the other hand, to enact legislation when society is not ready to accept it will create a scenario of conflict and confrontation.

The next challenge facing us, then, is to understand how we can minister as salt and light to a society that has a demoralized conscience. The enactment of law remains one way. But, as with an adolescent child who is categorically refusing to obey the rules of the home, it is futile to try to make more rules in the hope that these rules will reform the child. Rather, we are left with trying to reach the child through the conscience. So it is with society.

It is helpful to note that knowledge is a primary vehicle for reaching the conscience, for all knowledge is at root knowledge of good and evil. As an example, we observe that we have lost the legal war in the fight against abortion. If, however, we see this as an occasion to minister to the conscience of society by increasing societal knowledge about why abortion is evil, then we have before us the opportunity to change society in a fundamental way. Only with this change will society be once again ready to consider enacting more restrictive abortion legislation.

Advance the Kingdom

Our goal as Reformed Christians has always been to see the Kingdom of Righteousness advanced. What we need to consider, however, is that there are ways of accomplishing this goal beyond the arena of politics and that we can do so without compromising the integrity of this Kingdom vision.

May we remember these words of Solomon: "Evil men do not understand justice, but those who seek the Lord understand it fully" (Prov. 28:1). "When the righteous thrive, the people rejoice; when the wicked rule, the people groan" (Prov.29:2).

John E. Stronks
Chatham, Ont.

Note:
Thank you for this opening bid in what we hope will be a fruitful discussion in CC.

Editor.

CPJ should appeal to the creation, not tradition

I am writing in response to your editorial "Let the sun shine on all committed couples?" (CC, October 24) and to CPJ's policy document "Legal Equality: A public justice response to discrimination against gays and lesbians."

As both your editorial and the CPJ document correctly state, the differentiated responsibilities of church and state may well call for different approaches to an issue such as homosexual rights. It is possible for us as members of a church to confess with Scripture that homosexual relations are outside the will of God and thus anti-normative, while acknowledging as citizens of a state that public justice may require some sort of recognition of such relationships.

Traditions change

However, the CPJ document contains a significant loose end in its argument, and this has to do with the character of marriage as a distinctive norm-governed institution with its own place in created human life.

The document states: "In respect for the traditions of Canadian society, the established terms 'marriage' and 'spouse' should be reserved for heterosexual relationships. These terms should not be broadened to include any other types of relationships." While I would agree with this conclusion, I believe that the appeal to tradition is insufficient, since traditions change and cannot themselves be a source of norms.

Gerald Vandezande predicts that at some point "governments or courts may well end up calling all [long-term sexual] relationships 'marriages' and all partners 'spouses.'" Such may indeed occur, but this is all the more reason for us Christians to alert government to the reality of marriage as an intrinsically heterosexual union which it is called upon simply to recognize for what it is. To do this demands an argument going beyond (or perhaps behind) tradition.

Continued on page 6...

Christian Courier

Member of Canadian Church Press and Evangelical Press Association.
Canada mail: Publications Mail Registration No. 0451. Postage paid at St. Catharines, Ont. Postmaster: send address changes to Christian Courier, 4-261 Martindale Rd., St. Catharines, Ont. L2W 1A1.
U.S. mail: Christian Courier (USPS 518-090). Second-class postage paid at Lewiston, NY. Postmaster: send address changes to Christian Courier, Box 110, Lewiston, NY 14092.

Subscriptions: (effective Feb. 1, 1995)	**Canada** (GST incl.)	**U.S.A.** (GST free)
one year (44 issues)	$43.50	$35.00 U.S.
two years (88 issues)	$82.00	$66.00 U.S.
three years (132 issues)	$123.00	$99.00 U.S.
overseas one year	$135 airmail $85.00 surface mail	

Advertising deadlines: display advertising: Wednesday, 8:30 a.m.; classified advertising: Thursday, 8:30 a.m. All deadlines are for the following week's issue. See classified pages for more details. Advertising rate sheets available.
(ISSN 1192-3415) Published weekly on Fridays except for Feb. 28, April 4, May 30, July 11, Aug. 15, Oct. 3, Nov. 28, and Dec. 26.
All correspondence should be addressed to: 4-261 Martindale Rd., St. Catharines, Ont. L2W 1A1, Tel.: 905-682-8311 or fax: 905-682-8313
PRINTED IN CANADA
This tabloid contains recycled paper.

CPJ should appeal to the creation...

... *continued from page 5*

We can easily do justice to homosexual couples without confusing their relationships with a marriage, as some are inclined to do today.

As a lifelong heterosexual union facilitating the upbringing of another generation, marriage is not simply a product of arbitrary human wills, or "socially constructed," as some would put it. Nor is it simply a product of tradition, as others might have it. Certainly there is a cultural-formative side to marriage, and marriages tend to look somewhat different from time to time and from place to place. But virtually every culture, except perhaps for our own in recent years, is easily able to distinguish a marriage from other relationships.

This, supported by the witness of Scripture (e.g., Gen. 2:24), should indicate that marriage itself is a divinely appointed institution rooted in God's creation and thus subject to those norms peculiar to its character, especially biological complementarity and fidelity, or troth. That this is not clearly emphasized is a significant weakness in the CPJ document.

Ironically, both the editorial and the CPJ document presuppose that we are able to distinguish between church and state and the normative tasks of each. Similarly, we should not be afraid to distinguish marriage from other committed relationships, even if — or especially if — the larger society may be exhibiting some confusion on the matter.

A purposeful reality

Undoubtedly the best currently available analysis of this subject is David Orgon Coolidge's recent *Same-Sex Marriage?*, a Crossroads monograph (vol.1, no.9, 1996, revised 1997), which was prompted by the controversy in Hawaii over extending the definition of marriage to cover homosexual unions.

Coolidge discerns four models of marriage: the traditional, the liberal, the postmodern and the social pluralist. The traditional focuses on complementarity, the liberal on choice, the postmodern on commitment, and the social pluralist on a "total sexual community" capable of comprehending the other three norms. The social pluralist model is rooted in the Kuyperian, neo-Calvinist and neo-Thomist Roman Catholic traditions, each of which recognizes that marriage is part of a plural reality that is ordered and purposeful.

The singular virtue of Coolidge's analysis is that it looks beyond tradition to the nature of created reality itself. If at some point CPJ undertakes to revise its own document, it would do well to take into account Coolidge's insightful analysis, which was not available until after the CPJ document was published.

Marriage is more than friendship

James W. Skillen argues (correctly, in my view) that a homosexual relationship is a type of friendship and ought not to be confused with a marriage. Certainly we do well to encourage fidelity in friendships as well as in marriage, but marriage intrinsically entails certain responsibilities that a friendship does not. Thus to treat the two identically is to risk doing an injustice to marriage as a particular institution with its own specific needs and obligations.

Certainly we must seek to do justice to homosexual couples. But we must exhibit a clear understanding that the difference between a homosexual relationship and a marriage is not simply traditional but is anchored in the character of a plural reality created by God himself. Otherwise we risk going astray.

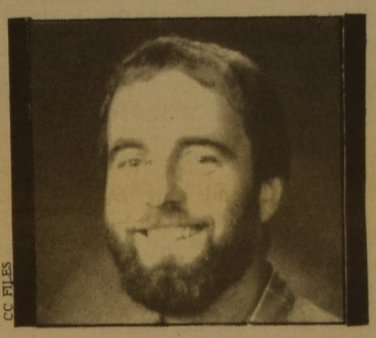
The Coolidge monograph is available from Crossroads, c/o Evangelicals for Social Action, 10 E. Lancaster Avenue, Wynnewood, PA 19096, USA for $5.00 (US).

David T. Koyzis
Ancaster, Ont.

Redeemer prof to analyze how various Christian traditions view sports

Marian Van Til

ANCASTER, Ont. — Redeemer College physical education professor John Byl has embarked on a project which will give him, and eventually the public, a good idea of how various Christian denominations in Canada view sports, dance, recreation and other things related to physical health.



CC FILES

John Byl

Byl will sift through hundreds of back issues of Canadian Christian journals (both church publications and independent papers like *Christian Courier*) to see how each of them has handled — or not handled — sports, health, physical education, recreation and dance.

That will tell him something about how the Christian Reformed community, the Canadian Reformed, Mennonites, Baptists, Catholics and some others view sports, how that relates to their worldview, and how their attitudes may have changed over the years.

Byl has begun with *Christian Courier* and the *Mennonite Brethren Herald*. He intends to analyze, as well, papers such as *Clarion* (Canadian Reformed), *The Canadian Baptist*, *The Catholic New Times*, and others, keeping a computer data base for each publication.

History and insights

"I want to get a handle on the history of Canadian churches, how they have dealt with these things," Byl says. In addition, he asserts, "In the different traditions there may be insights that we can learn from each other."

When Byl completes his research, "in about 10 years," he jokes, he intends to "pull it all together in a book."

The project could actually take him some years, he surmises, because he's involved in his teaching and "a lot of other projects."

This project is not unlike work he did for his master's thesis in 1983, in which he surveyed Christian Reformed-related publications (*The Banner*, *Christian Home and School*, *Reformed Journal* and *Christian Courier* (then *Calvinist Contact*) to decipher CRC attitudes toward dance, sports and leisure from 1926 to 1981. He then compared what he found to one specific CRC community, Chatham, Ontario, during the same period.

(See Byl's analysis of CC on p. 14.)

Support Reformed Faith Witness (RFW)

Mission Statement: *Reformed Faith Witness is a Christian ministry committed to communicate biblical perspectives on current and world events in accordance with Reformed traditions.*

Make a donation for 1997!

Reformed Faith Witness, the new publisher of *Christian Courier*, is a charitable organization which received tax exempt status from Revenue Canada.
Please consider making a financial gift for 1997. All contributions will be used to help *Christian Courier* and the cause of Reformed Christian journalism. Send your cheque and complete the coupon below and we will issue an official receipt. Thank you very much!

COUPON **COUPON**

To: Reformed Faith Witness
4-261 Martindale Road
St. Catharines, ON L2W 1A1

Registration No. 1092873-47

❑ Yes, please enter my/our name on your mailing list and keep me/us informed about Reformed Faith Witness.
❑ I/we enclose a donation payable to Reformed Faith Witness. Please send receipt.

Name: _____ **Amount:** _____
Address: _____
City/Town: _____ **Code:** _____

P.S.: CC subscription and advertising payments are not tax deductible. Only amounts of $10 or over clearly designated to Reformed Faith Witness will be officially receipted.

CHRISTIAN STEWARDSHIP SERVICES

Providing counselling in **estate planning, will making, insurances, Christian investments,** and **special giving.**

CSS

- *Free of charge — Confidential*
- *Public presentation — Home visits*

Please write: **CSS**, 455 Spadina Ave., #210, Toronto, ON M5S 2G8 or telephone: **(416) 598-2181**

Psalter Hymnals falling apart?

Don't buy replacements, recycle them. We can rebind almost any book for a fraction of the cost of new, and the rebound books will last much longer than the original binding. Why not send us one of your church's hymnals or bibles and we will rebind it at no charge, just to show you how good your old books can look. Send your sample request on church letterhead with the item for binding.

Limit one sample per church. Normal price for quantities of five or more is $5.65. We rebind and restore all types of books, including personal and family bibles.

wbm Wallaceburg Bookbinding & MFG. CO. LTD.
1-800-214-BIND
95 Arnold Street
Wallaceburg, ON N8A 3P3

Film Review

The Full Monty bares the soul

Marian Van Til

The Full Monty

Rated AA. Stars Tom Wilkinson, Robert Carlyle, Mark Addy, Hugo Speer, Paul Barber, Steve Huison, William Snape. Written by Simon Beaufoy. Directed by Peter Cattaneo.

This hilarious, low-budget but brilliantly made British film is ricocheting across North America like a crazy, speeding bullet, with hardly a dollar spent on advertising by its producers. That's because virtually everyone who sees it tells a handful of other people to see it.

The expression "the full monty" means to go whole hog, or to take it all off, as in shedding one's clothes. You may have heard that this film is about six guys who take their clothes off. It is, sort of; but mostly it's not. Should a Christian see such a film? Please read on, then consider.

Cold steel

Sheffield, an industrial city in the north of England, was a booming steel town for many years. But when the mills closed, thousands of (mostly) men were put out of work. The local economy couldn't absorb them all, so many hundreds remained pretty much permanently on the dole.

When a man's identity and self-image are so closely tied with what he does for a living, as it is in European and North American society, one can imagine how long-term unemployment effects his self-esteem, and, consequently, all his relationships.

The six men we get to know in varying degrees cope with this emotional blow in different ways.

"Gaz" is divorced as well as unemployed. All he has left in life is his son, about 11 years old. But Gaz is preoccupied with his predicament and he's not doing very well these days as a parent. Given his state of mind, his ex-wife is becoming worried about their son spending so much time with his father; and the boy himself isn't always keen on it.

So Gaz's former wife, who is in a new, stable relationship, says she's going to sue for sole custody of the boy unless Gaz can come up with his delinquent child-support payments. At the thought of it, desperation seizes him.

Rehearsing for the big show (from left): Wilkinson, Snape, Carlyle, Huison, Speer, Barber, Addy.

Dave is Gaz's buddy. They are a study in contrasts, both in appearance and personality. Gaz is lanky and pale, his longish, straight, blond hair framing a gaunt face with flashing brown eyes and a sharp, thin nose. Dave is round and pudgy, with doe eyes and closely cropped, dark hair.

Dave is married, but he's been withdrawing from Julie, his wife, emotionally and physically. She doesn't know why and is paralyzed with concern about their relationship. He knows why but can't speak the words: he has let her down, he thinks, and has lost any real purpose in life. He feels worthless and unattractive, and believes that's how she sees him. So mostly, between visits to the employment office, he hangs out with Gaz, while Gaz's son often tags along.

Last stop

Gerald was Gaz and Dave's supervisor at the steel plant. Having had a white-collar job he's now in a slightly different situation. He's smart and had risen along the expected career track, but now his train's been derailed. Who will hire a guy in his 50s, even if he's competent and experienced?

Gerald's job loss is such a blow that for six months he has hardly been able to admit his loss to himself, and can't bring himself to tell his wife at all. He keeps getting up every day, putting on his suit and going out, ostensibly to work. Oblivious, his wife keeps spending, dreaming of a ski vacation; and he keeps paying the bills by running up credit and spending his dole cheques.

We don't get to know the three other men in the story very well, except that one of them, "Lomper," is trying to commit suicide (and fails even at that) when Dave rescues him. Of the other two, "Horse" is a 60ish black man who seems to get emotional support from his mother, a woman friend and a niece. Guy is young, good-looking and seems to have little more than his physique to recommend him.

Ignorance is bliss

Soon Gaz begins devising a way to earn the money he needs to keep seeing his son. When he and Dave pass a theatre one day where they see a poster advertising a show by the Chippendale dancers (whose act involves dancing and stripping to their G-strings), Gaz says offhandedly: "We could do that. Why are they any better than us" (sic)?

Dave is startled and dismisses Gaz as nuts. When they run into Gerald in the employment office, Gaz starts talking about it again. Gerald tells him to forget it: Gaz is scrawny, Dave is fat, and they're both ugly, he asserts. But they've piqued Gerald's interest.

Gradually they hatch a plan, and they hire three other guys through an audition at the abandoned mill. That's also where they sometimes meet to practise. Gerald, who is into exercise, gets them working out, dancing in sync, and urges Dave to go on a diet. Nobody has said anything about "the full Monty," so they are blissfully unaware that that's what Gaz has in mind for their one-time-only show. Near the end, two of the men want to drop out for fear of looking stupid.

No Greek gods

What becomes clear virtually from the start is that this film is really about baring these men's souls, not their bodies. The AA rating comes from some vulgar language and a few instances of (very unnecessary) profanity, not nudity.

Through not taking the least bit seriously the prevailing view that bodies need to be beautiful and toned if they are to be seen in public, the men turn the very idea behind strip shows on its head. They don't have Greek-god physiques, they know it and it doesn't phase them. Their show becomes not an occasion for lewdness, but a short comedy routine in which they and their audience (which, embarrassingly at first, includes friends, neighbors and relatives) share their joke.

Their being willing to make fools of themselves not only bonds the men together as friends but helps them re-evaluate their worth as people. If clothes don't make the man, and physique doesn't either, neither does one's profession — or lack thereof, and these guys finally realize that.

Very human

The film doesn't condescend to its uneducated, working-class characters. It invites us to understand their foibles, some of which are likeable, some not.

We Christians don't share these men's values on a fundamental level. Yet the film is moving because virtually everything about it rings true: the characters, the dialogue, the attitudes, the struggles, the resultant humor, which is genuinely funny, not smutty.

In the midst of this picture of unredeemed human life there are many little pinpricks of redemption. It's easy to accept the film's invitation: we *like* these guys because, on a very human level, we understand them.

ATTENTION:

Business Community/Christian Organizations

Insert YOUR message in our special 1997 Christmas Issue

In past years we have supplied members of Christian Reformed churches across Canada with a free copy of the annual Christmas Issue. This year we plan to do the same. Date of this issue will be **December 5.** It will be mailed to our regular subscribers on **December 2.**

In addition, we plan to distribute close to 20,000 copies of this issue to Reformed Christians across Canada free of charge.

To print so many extra copies costs money. We are appealing to the business community and to Christian organizations to help us out. Feel free to include your annual Christmas greetings in your ads, as you have done before.

Please do not wait! Contact Stan de Jong by phone at **(905) 682-8311** or fax **(905) 682-8313** to obtain a rate sheet or to give your instructions.

Your continued support will be greatly appreciated.

Deadline for advertisements in this special issue is November 19, 1997.

Church

Two churches make Sunday mornings less segregated

CHARLES TOWN, W. Va. (EP) — "Sunday morning at 11 o'clock is the most segregated hour in America," said a speaker at the Promise Keepers "Stand in the Gap" rally in Washington, D.C., Oct. 5. Rev. JoAnne Alexander, watching the rally through a satellite link at her church in Charles Town, West Virginia, turned to a friend and said, "And what are we going to do about it?"

By the end of the day the senior pastor of Oakland United Methodist Church had an idea. Late that night, when the charter bus returned from Stand in the Gap, she talked with her husband and co-pastor Kent Tice, and with Rev. Walter Jackson, a friend who pastors the Wainwright Baptist Church in Charles Town.

Better start now

"She asked me if it would be a problem if they brought people from their church over to have communion with us in the service the next morning," said Jackson.

"I told her, 'If we can't start getting along down here, how are we going to spend eternity together?' I thought it was a great idea."

Jackson called his deaconesses early on Sunday. "How many communion trays did you prepare?" he asked. They had done the customary two trays of crackers and communion cups for the congregation of 120. "I think we're going to need more," he said. He met them at the church to help get it ready.

The morning service was underway, and the choir was singing behind him. Rev. Jackson looked down the aisle of Wainwright Baptist Church, a mostly black church. Through the window at the back he could see Alexander and Tice walking from the parking lot, trailed by members of their church, a mostly white congregation about the same size as theirs.

The choir kept singing as Pastor Alexander walked in, carrying a glass chalice; the Oakland church uses the common cup and the common loaf in its communion celebration. Jackson stepped out of the pulpit, and put the glass chalice on the communion table — "a symbol," Alexander called it. He escorted Alexander and Tice to the pulpit.

"We watched as our church members filed in," says Tice. "They'd sit down and get adjusted, and then they'd look around, and tears would start to flow. It was happening all over the congregation."

Invited a few friends

Nearly every member of their church had made the journey across town. "We were surprised. Although we shouldn't have been. We have a congregation of great people," says Tice.

The Baptist church deacons hurried to find more chairs, and the choir kept singing.

When everyone was settled, Jackson stepped back into the pulpit, standing with Alexander and Tice. After three tries, he managed to speak, "I told you all I'd invited a few friends to church this morning," he said to the crowd, and the church erupted with laughter.

When it was time for communion, the Baptist deacons served the worshippers. Jackson, Tice, and Alexander, along with Rev. William Thomas, retired minister of Wainwright Baptist, stood at the front. The four of them took communion from the common loaf and the common cup, each breaking off a piece of bread and dipping it into the chalice.

Afterward, there were a lot of smiles and hugs. "A lot of the people know each other already; they work together," observed Tice.

Good news spreads

By Tuesday, news of the service had spread throughout the town. "Even people who weren't there, when they heard about it were really moved," said Jackson.

But the communion service was only the beginning. The two churches will be meeting for a fellowship dinner and a harvest festival party, and are jointly planning a live Nativity pageant for Christmas. "We're continuing to look for ways to fellowship together," says Tice.

"It had to start somewhere," Jackson concludes. "If we continue to harbor racial hatred and bitterness, then we're not living as the family of God."

Canadian Promise Keepers more subdued

CC Staff

EDMONTON — Canadian men are responding somewhat more mutedly to the Promise Keepers Christian men's movement than their American counterparts have, according to a report by Brian Laghi from the *Globe and Mail's* Alberta Bureau.

While 12,000 men "wept, sang and prayed together" last Saturday in the three-quarters full Edmonton Coliseum, 45,000 were "doing the same thing in a football stadium near Dallas," writes Laghi.

Promise Keepers' Canadian CEO Ken McGeorge thinks the more subdued Canadian response is due at least partly to the fact that Canada is a more secular society than the U.S. is. And Koos Reineking, field manager for Promise Keepers in Western Canada, based in Surrey, B.C., repeats the often cited conclusion that Canadians are more reserved than Americans.

But Tim Wilson, one of the Edmonton rally organizers, says he thinks Canadians may actually be more tolerant of Promise Keepers' goals — there have been no protests against rallies in Canada as there have been in the U.S. However, some observers think that has to do with the sheer size of the American rallies, and the potential for U.S. Promise Keepers to influence society — which is a good or a bad thing, depending on your point of view.

Stronger status quo

The movement is only two years old in Canada, but in the U.S. has had longer to gain momentum; it's been six years since Promise Keepers' founding by former Denver football coach Bill McCartney. Ken McGeorge adds that lack of Christian radio stations in Canada, fewer notable evangelists and fewer churchgoers may also explain the differences.

Laghi reports that Earle Waugh, head of the religious studies program at the University of Alberta, says the mainstream Canadian churches have a "tighter relationship with the government in that they accept funding for schools." There are what Waugh calls "a number of semi-state churches" in Canada, which are less likely to question the status quo than are American churches. In the U.S., churches and religious groups are more likely to challenge government policies and society's morals, Waugh asserts.

Waugh also points out that 80 per cent of Canadians are either Catholic, United, Anglican or Presbyterian [though far fewer actually go to church], and those who do go to church seldom attend each other's churches. But the U.S. has a much stronger tradition of inter-denominational worship, Waugh told Laghi, a fact which helps groups like Promise Keepers grow.

Nigerian Christian leaders warn of impending religious war

Obed Minchakpu

JOS, Nigeria (Compass) — The leadership of the Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN) has complained to the federal government of Nigeria about the discriminatory recruitment policies of the country's armed forces which target Christians.

CAN warned that if the discriminatory policies aimed at marginalizing Christians from recruitment into the armed forces and the police force are not checked, a religious war could erupt that would tear Nigeria apart.

In a press conference held in October by CAN in Kaduna, the chairperson of the Northern Nigeria chapter of CAN, Archbishop Peter Jatau, said that Christians need to caution the government over lopsided recruitment into the armed forces, which he claimed deliberately favors Muslims.

"There have been complaints that some of the young people who go to Zaria (Nigerian Army recruitment centre) for recruitment into the armed forces return to say that they were rejected because of their religious affiliation. Some were weeded out in the middle of their training because of their religious persuasion," Jatau said. "This has been constantly reported."

No peace without justice

"We are pursuing peace, but we cannot have peace when there is no justice. Justice is fundamental in the acquisition of peace," Jatau said. "To have peace, the recruitment into the armed forces and the police should be done in such a way that everyone should have a sense of belonging."

The acting director of Defense Information for the Nigerian Army, Colonel Godwin Ugbo, denies the allegations.

"He [the CAN chairman] is wrong on the issues raised and seems to have drawn conclusions based on incorrect information," Ugbo said.

"Under existing recruitment guidelines, there is no provision for piecemeal recruitment of Nigerians into the armed forces. The vacancies and requirements are duly advertised and recruitment is carried out nationwide."

However, the Northern Nigeria Christian Elders Forum (NORCEF) defended CAN, saying that it is true Christians are being marginalized.

A communique issued by NORCEF after a meeting in Kaduna stated, "Military authorities must accept the fact that the profession has been politicized and religion has consequently become a relevant consideration under such a politicized rather than a purely professional force."

NORCEF challenged the government "to make public, statistics of all recruitment into the various services of the armed forces and police over the past three years, indicating the local government areas, state of origin and religious beliefs of the officer cadets and recruits."

CAN said some Christians have changed their names to Muslim names in order to be recruited into the Nigerian army.

DYKSTRA BROS. ROOFING (1992) LTD.

Free Estimates

R.R. #1, Beamsville, ON L0R 1B0

Marty: (905) 563-7374
Chuck: (905) 646-0199
Fax#: (905) 563-0301

Constant contact

Chapter & Verse

Wayne Brouwer
Andrew Kuyvenhoven
● Laura Smit
Al Wolters

"My friends, if anyone is detected in a transgression, you who have received the Spirit should restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness.... Bear one another's burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ" (Gal. 6:1-2).

This past week I celebrated the anniversary of my ordination into the Presbyterian ministry. When I became a Presbyterian, one of the things which I most appreciated about my new denomination was its acceptance of diversity. Having recently come through a painful experience of being rejected by the denomination [the Christian Reformed Church] in which I was raised, I reveled in the accepting stance which Presbyterians took toward all sorts of people and ideas. Having been on the receiving end of exclusion, I was resolved always to be as tolerant, inclusive and accepting as possible.

I soon found my commitment to tolerance challenged, as the PC (USA) entered into a particularly intense stage in our on-going battle over the ordination of unrepentant, practising homosexuals. Suddenly my new commitment to inclusivity was at odds with my old commitment to the authority of Scripture as I understood it. The commitment to Scripture won, but the victory was painful. Every time I spoke at a presbytery meeting against the ordination of practising homosexuals, I felt pain. I was acutely aware of what such rejection felt like, and I hated being the cause of such hurt. Even though the question of the ordination of women is not *at all* analogous to the question of the ordination of unrepentant, practising homosexuals, the experience of being denied ordination must feel much the same.

Easy to shut out the pain

In the years since my ordination, this debate has increasingly polarized the Presbyterian Church. As the rhetoric has escalated and tempers have risen, I have found it becoming easier and easier to say no without continuing to feel pain at that necessity. It has become normal for me to feel annoyance and impatience with my opponents rather than to feel compassion or an awareness of their genuine suffering. It has become easiest to simply avoid in-depth conversation with those with whom I disagree.

I recently served on a jury for a criminal trial which lasted two weeks. For most of those two weeks, during the presentation of all the evidence and arguments, we jurors were not supposed to be discussing the case. We found ourselves stuck in a small room for hours at a time with not much to do but talk to one another, and, with the case off limits, we mostly talked about ourselves.

I spent a lot of time in conversation with one other juror in particular, a devout Episcopalian who shared many of my interests in theology and music, but whose theological convictions were sharply different from my own. In fact, he personified all that I have been battling in the Presbyterian Church for the past many years. But I could not avoid conversation with this man. I could not simply nod, smile and move on. We were required to spend two weeks confined in a room together.

Spending time with this man necessarily made me like and admire him. He had to leave in a hurry one day in order to co-ordinate dinner at a homeless shelter in downtown Boston, which he does one day a week. He told stories about the children he tutors in the impoverished urban neighborhood where he has chosen to live. We shared with one another our love of music and experiences singing in our church choirs. I have no doubt that he is a committed Christian. Despite our significant differences, we had far more in common with one another than we did with anyone else in the room.

Avoid the side roads

It is good for me to know and to remember that when I speak what I believe to be God's truth for his church, I will give pain to my new friend, Mark. I still need to speak the truth, but I also need to feel the pain. I am not allowed to retreat from the experience of sharing the suffering of my fellow believers. Somehow, I need to find a balance between the fearless statement of the truth and a genuine empathy for others, particularly those with whom I disagree.

I've been reading some meditations by Mother Teresa recently. If anyone in our world has been able to consistently be both truthful and empathic, it would be she. In her meditations, she reveals her secret. She speaks of her ability to see Christ in every poor person to whom she ministers. This ability, she says, was rooted in her daily vision of Christ in the sacrament of the mass. She was in "constant contact" with him because of her daily discipline of worship, and this allowed her to see his face in surprising places.

Because she saw Christ in the poor and the dying, she was required to share the suffering of the poor and the dying. She could not walk by, unaffected by their pain. But this constant contact also gave her the courage to say unpopular things, even to very powerful people.

Surely, if Mother Teresa could learn to see Christ in a poor Hindu leper, we can learn to see Christ in those members of our churches with whom we disagree? It is the constant contact with Christ which makes it possible to stand in the tension between speaking the truth and bearing one another's burdens.

If we step to either side — either the easy sentimentality of uncritical tolerance or the quick dogmatism of absolute statements of truth — we will miss seeing Christ, because he is on neither side. Christ stands in the tension, holding truth and love together in his own person. It is only if we stand in that tension, as well, that we will be where he is.

Laura Smit is a pastor in the Presbyterian Church (USA) and is currently doing doctoral work in philosophical aesthetics at Boston University, Boston, Mass.

Michigan CRC withdraws request to classis to extend gay minister's credentials

GRAND RAPIDS, Mich. (URNS) — At the Sept. 18 meeting of Classis Grand Rapids East of the Christian Reformed Church, the Eastern Avenue CRC of Grand Rapids, Mich., withdrew its request to extend the ministerial credentials of CRC minister Rev. Jim Lucas, who is homosexual.

Lucas, who by his own admission is gay but has remained celibate and will remain so as long as he is a CRC minister, serves as chaplain of AWARE ("As We ARE"), a gay support group which meets at Eastern Avenue and is affiliated with a network of similar groups in the United States and Canada.

Because the organization is not officially endorsed by the CRC as one to which a Christian Reformed minister can be called, Lucas is technically without a call and Classis Grand Rapids East must annually renew his ministerial standing. Lucas last held a regular ministerial position in 1989.

'Faithful same-sex unions' the sticking point

Eastern Avenue pastor Rev. Mary Antonides said her elders met September 14 when they learned Lucas' ministry had unanimously decided that "faithful, committed, same-sex unions can be an experience of God's grace and within God's will and should be affirmed by the Christian church," and decided "that this decision on the part of AWARE prevents us from calling anyone to this ministry at this time."

In an appeal to Classis Grand Rapids East, Lucas proposed that the classis extend his credentials until next May rather than the customary one-year extension, thus "allowing classis to let my credentials lapse before synod, if you so choose, in order to spare our denominational assembly from a possibly contentious debate."

After long debate, classis finally voted to take an action which it hoped would offend neither supporters nor opponents of Lucas's continued ordination. "We made a decision to withhold action without prejudice," says classis president Dr. William Vanden Bosch. "His ministerial credentials will continue until January and people will have the opportunity to discuss some very new stuff that has occurred."

Grace and compassion

Lucas asserted in his appeal that Eastern Avenue's decision had "left much misunderstanding and hurt among everyone involved," and noted that classical endorsement of the Eastern Avenue action could create serious negative reaction against the Christian Reformed Church among homosexual members.

Afterward Lucas said he was "very encouraged" by the classis vote. "All I wanted was for classis to show some willingness to struggle with how to minister to gay and lesbian people," said Lucas. "It was clear that the folks in classis are dealing with this issue with grace and Christian compassion. Those of us who are gay have to struggle and it's good to see they are willing to share that struggle with us."

Lucas hoped to "work things out" with his own congregation, Eastern Avenue, prior to the next classis meeting. According to the classis president, the January decision may focus less on Lucas's views of same-sex unions than on whether he has a formal call to a ministerial position.

"You can't continue forever; it's been a long time with Jim," said Dr. William Vanden Bosch. "He has said, 'I think I need to look for Plan B,' and we are saying, 'You have until January to work this out.'"

Rates to December 31, 1997

RRSP	Regular Fund
Approx. 4.5%	4.5%

Your funds will be invested in Christian Reformed Church and Christian school building projects in Canada.

CRC EXTENSION FUND

Call: (416) 461-1207 evenings or write:
Christian Reformed Extension Fund
45 Harriet St., Toronto, ON M4L 2G1

Feature

News for Papa

A brave girl's war-time mission

by Jacoba Bos

The icy northwind blowing across the flat land cut like a knife through Janny's thin coat. Her hands in worn mittens tightened around the handlebars of the old bicycle she was riding. A strand of hair fell across her forehead as she braced herself against the storm; her strong legs pedalled with all her might.

The bare trees lining the narrow road seemed to sigh in the bleakness of a midwinter afternoon in war-torn Holland.

"Oh good, I'm getting closer," Janny said to herself as she saw the church steeple outlined against the threatening sky, the brass rooster on the weathervane spinning crazily in the strong wind.

The anticipation of seeing her father, and the message she was bringing to him, lightened Janny's heart and urged her to pedal even faster. She rode on; the cadence of the bike wheels repeated the joyful news:
We have a baby brother and all is well.

Janny had seen the baby lying in his cradle, the midwife hovering over him, and mother, who rested in the big bed, tired-looking but with a content smile on her face.

"He's got a bald head just like Mr. Jansen," four-year-old Japie had said when he saw the little pink head snugly tucked between the crisp white sheets.

"Can I hold him, Mom?" Rietje had pleaded. "I've held Willie's little sister before."

"Ya, but she's two years old" Henk, her twelve-year-old brother had protested. Before mother could answer, the midwife had ushered the children out of the bedroom with the promise of pancakes for supper. Mother had called Janny back.

"Come, sit here, I want to talk to you for a minute." Janny had sat down on the edge of the bed. "Was it hard Mom?" she had asked shyly.

Her mother had nodded. "No, it wasn't real difficult, but the hardest thing for me was not having Papa here with me like he was when you and Henk and Rietje and Japie were born."

"So, why can't Papa be home, like he always was?" Janny had asked impatiently.

"Is it because of the war?"

Her mother had nodded silently as she had taken Janny's hand in hers.

"I know it's not easy Janny, but Papa has to be away from home to do some important things."

"Like what?" Janny had sneered. "And why can't he even be home on Sundays?" Oh, I hate this stupid war! The 'Moffen' took our food and our bikes, and now they're taking my papa too!" She would have stomped out of the room then if her mother had not grabbed her apron strings, pulling her back to the bed.

"Janny, I know you're upset, but try to listen to me," her voice had been urgent. "Papa is helping others because those people are hunted like animals and if nobody helps them they'll be shipped to Germany like herds of cattle and then there's no hope for them anymore...." Her voice had trailed off.

"But why can't someone else look after those people?" Janny had asked stubbornly as her fingers traced the pattern in the crocheted bedspread.

"Of course there are many other people doing the same thing, because it's our Christian duty; and I want you to understand," she had put her arm around her daughter's shoulders, "that what we're talking about here is our secret. Nobody may know what Papa is doing. Okay?"

We have a baby brother and all is well.

She had hugged Janny and continued, "And now I want you to go and tell Papa about our new baby. Mevrouw Jansen said you may borrow her bike for the afternoon."

She had sank back then into the pillows, her cheeks rosy and her blonde curls moist on her forehead.

The baby had stirred and started to cry. "Can I get him, Mom?" Janny had whispered.

"Sure." Her mother had smiled mischievously. "The midwife is busy downstairs so we're safe."

Very carefully Janny had placed the little bundle in her mother's arms. "I'm sorry, Mom," Janny had whispered as the baby nursed contently at his mother's breast. "It's all right, sweatheart" her mother had said. "But you'd better go now. If you bike fast you'll get there in half an hour and be back before supper."

She had given Janny exact directions and stressed again the confidentiality of her mission. "Just tell people you're on your way to visit a friend," she had concluded.

"And don't forget to wear your mittens and scarf."

"Oh, Mom, don't forget I'm 14, not four years old," Janny laughed as she had taken off her apron and brushed her long blonde hair.

****

Halt, scheune Fraulein!" Startled, Janny braked to a stop. A big German soldier confronted her, his gloved hands close to hers on the handlebars and his eyes taking in her young, shapely body.

"And where are you going?" he questioned her.

"To the next village, Sir." Janny pointed to the rooftops now clearly visible.

"So what are you going to do there?" A lewd smile spread across his face.

"I'm visiting a friend, sir," Janny answered politely.

"Hmmmm, lucky guy," he smacked his broad lips. "So, we'd better not keep him waiting then." He stepped aside and walked away, his steel-toed boots clicking on the cobblestones.

Janny rode on through the cold gray streets and found the church. "The second house on the right, Number 21," her mother had instructed her. A stern-looking, grey-haired woman in a dark dress opened the door.

"Yes?" she said curtly. "Is my father here? I..., I have to tell him something," Janny blurted, her face red from the cold and the anxiety of the moment.

"Your father?" Oh, yes I know who you mean. Your name is Janny, right?" The woman's face softened. "Do you have a message?"

"No. Yes, I mean...," Janny stuttered, staring at her wooden shoes. She swallowed hard to get rid of the lump in her throat. She heard a door open inside the house. The smell of soup made her feel weak with hunger.

Gathering up all her courage she tried again. "I really want to speak to my father. May I come in?" She looked hopefully at the lady in the doorway. "I'm afraid that's not possible," the lady sighed. "Besides, your father is not here."

"But where is he then?" Janny fought back her tears. "I haven't seen my papa for a long

time and now I want to tell him about my new baby brother."

"Oh, you brave girl, coming all this way and not finding him." The woman put her arms around Janny's heaving shoulders. "Why don't you come in and rest a little?" She led her guest into the narrow hall, locking the door securely behind her.

She then turned around, opened the hall door and shouted something Janny couldn't understand. "That's just a game we play," the woman said. "We'll just wait a minute here," she continued, while rustling noises could be heard from all over the house. "Here, I'll take your coat."

Janny followed her into the small living room. On a tea-warmer stood a teapot, surrounded by cups and saucers on a silver-grey tray. The candle inside the tea-warmer spread a soft light over the velvet tablecloth and the chairs pushed close around the table. Janny recognized familiar Bible texts hanging on the wall printed and framed in black velvet.

****

A silver candy dish containing a few cookies was standing on the table beside a basket filled with yarn and knitting needles.

"Here, sit where it's warm." The woman placed a chair close to a black heater surrounded by wet wood and a drying rack full of towels and underwear. "Would you like a cup of tea?"

"Yes, please," Janny answered. She sat down, wearily, stretching her stockinged legs as close as possible to the little stove. "But I can't stay long, because I have to be home before dark," Janny said timidly, not wanting to cause any trouble for her austere hostess.

"And how far away is home?" Her voice was friendly almost like Oma's voice, Janny thought. "About half an hour," Janny replied as she slowly sipped the hot tea, warming her hands around the cup.

"So you have a few minutes to chat. Now tell me about the baby. It's a boy, right? And is everything well? With your mother too?" She gave Janny a woman-to-woman look.

"Yes, very good, the delivery was not easy because he is a big boy, almost nine pounds but it went well," Janny reported, repeating the words she'd heard the midwife say.

"Good, then we can thank God for that. And your mom's got good help. You're the oldest, are you?" Janny nodded as she gingerly took a bite from her cookie, savoring every crumb of this rare treat.

The lady took her knitting from the basket and without taking her eyes off Janny, started knitting. Her fingers seemed to fly while the dark yarn danced around the needles securely tucked under her large arms.

"I'm glad I can tell your father that he's got a wonderful daughter. He can sure be proud of you."

Janny smiled shyly, while trying hard to hide her disappointment at not meeting her father. If only she could hear his voice and feel the warmth of his strong arms around her. She remembered how he'd hugged her before leaving for secret assignments.

"I know I can depend on you to be a real help for Mom," he'd said on that day many months ago. Those months seemed more like years, Janny thought.

The clicking of boots on the street jolted Janny back to reality. A chorus of male voices broke the silence as a group of Nazi soldiers marched past the window. Their arms and legs moved in precision to the song they were singing. Prancing like proud horses they lifted their boots in unison, and with their helmeted heads all turned in one direction, they belted out the songs about their homeland.

The woman looked at Janny over the rim of her glasses.

"They're singing about their home," she explained. "They must get homesick for their wives and children too; we really should pray for them," she said mostly to herself as she put down her knitting. "I think I have something for you to take home. Does your family like raisin bread?"

"Oh, yes," Janny stammered. Her mouth watered as she thought about the thick slices of raisin bread, liberally spread with butter, which had been a traditional Sunday morning treat in their home before the war.

"Good. I'll get something ready for you while you get yourself ready." She went to the kitchen and soon returned with a large parcel.

"Here, this is for your family, let me give you a hand to tie it onto your bike." Together they tied the parcel securely onto the rusty baggage carrier of the old bicycle.

"There, now you're ready for the trip home. She pulled Janny's collar up around her ears. "That's a mean wind you're facing," she said as she shivered in the threadbare sweater she was wearing.

Then she embraced Janny. "Have a good trip home and give my greetings to your mother. Tell her 'Love and prayers from a sister in faith.'" There was a twinkle in her eyes as she waved goodbye to Janny, her white handkerchief blowing in the wind like a peace token.

Janny fought back her tears. "I haven't seen my papa for a long time and now I want to tell him about my new baby brother."

Jacoba Bos is a free-lance writer who lives in Strathroy, Ont.

How can we remember Remembrance Day today?

Willy Nywening

As a child, I remember bitter cold days standing at the cenotaph on Remembrance Day. The cold wind seemed appropriate, somehow, as we stood quietly and respectfully. The ceremony was beyond our comprehension but we knew instinctively that it was a day to behave and listen. Perhaps it was the painful expressions on the faces of our parents, and the tears that we saw some trying to wipe away inconspicuously, that told us there was something very significant happening. Those images created a warmth of spirit that I have never been able to forget.

One student observed that by remembering, we are given an opportunity to remember that fighting for ideals, regardless of the cost, is important to our society. This strikes me as a very wise statement.

The way in which we celebrate November 11 has changed drastically over the years. In the '50s and '60s, school children had the day off school to be able to go to the remembrance activities at the local town memorial. It was a holiday (perhaps that in itself added to the importance of the day). In the '70s and '80s, assemblies were held in our high school gym for staff and students. Now the commemoration takes the form of a short, dignified service over the PA system.

Through the years we have always worn poppies and have heard the poem "In Flanders's Fields" read. Another significant consistency over the years has been the writing and artistic competitions sponsored by local branches of the Royal Canadian Legion. Meaningful, relevant topics related to human rights issues and the need for remembering have been the focus of these competitions. Unfortunately, too few students are encouraged to take part.

How meaningful?

Recently I asked my students what the relevance of Remembrance Day is for them and what would make the day and the remembering more meaningful. All of the responses were similar. The day is for remembering those who died in the war fighting for freedom. A few noted that they had grandparents from whom they heard stories and this helped to make it more meaningful.

Many students indicated that the day would be more meaningful if they actually knew someone who had fought or if they could talk to someone who had been in war. Several students honestly stated that, although they wanted the day to be meaningful, it didn't have much significance for them.

BERT WITVOET

Schoolchildren gather at the St. Catharines, Ont., cenotaph for a Remembrance Day ceremony.

I found it interesting that most students made only general statements about the people fighting for freedom. One did state that war was about ideals. He observed that by remembering, we are given an opportunity to remember that fighting for ideals, regardless of the cost, is important to our society. This strikes me as a very wise statement.

I wonder what our young people truly discern about ideals. We are blessed, according to the United Nations, to live in the best country in the world. Our commitment to a multicultural society has certainly made us one of the most desirable places in the world to live. It could be said that principles or ideals are at the core of the Canadian identity. Our principles are the convictions that define our freedom. Yet many in our society are indifferent about remembering.

Opposing discrimination

It is significant to remember that those who suffered the most injustice, whose freedoms were most repressed were Jews, nonwhites, homosexuals and dissenters of any kind. Their autonomy was taken because they did not fit into the ideal society, the perfect race as it was defined by the government of the day. Our remembrance of those faces and names also demands that the many Japanese Canadian citizens who were subjected to indefensible transgressions, whose lives were raped and ruined in the name of freedom, also be remembered.

From personal stories I have heard I know that many good Christians broke the law, lied and cheated to save the lives of those who were being hunted down. I am sure that they did not embrace Judaism or lifestyles that were different from their own, yet they risked and sometimes gave their lives for the principles of freedom. They spoke out and acted against discrimination, intolerance, prejudice and bigotry.

It would be wonderful if past wars had been successful in obliterating all of these injustices. However, if we are honest with ourselves we must acknowledge that they are alive and well in our society. And then I wonder how we, the Christians of the '90s, respond.

I believe that if our fervor for freedom is authentic, there are no fewer demands of us than of those who gave their lives for the preservation of liberty. Of course, we must discern in a Christlike manner what forms those encounters will take. In whatever way that works for us as individuals, as followers of a righteous God, we must be engaged in a diligent commitment to the elimination of inequity.

Those who lived through the war in countries where disenfranchisement was an ominous reality can speak in profound ways about what freedom means. For those of us who have only heard the stories, the relevance of freedom must be examined in our own time and place. It must become an authentic belief that touches who we are and what we do. The love and understanding of the meaning of freedom must stimulate and persuade us to work for a better world. When indifference or apathy about justice becomes the ordinary, then history will undoubtedly repeat itself.

More than abstract

Remembrance Day must be more than an abstract commitment to the love of freedom. It must be an inspiration that drives and activates us to make a difference. It demands that we embrace the principles of freedom in the ways we live out our lives. Our young people need to see that we are being faithful to those standards of freedom by honestly and openly fighting the wars of injustice in our society. They need to identify and relate to the heroes of today in order to appreciate the champions of yesterday. Perhaps then they will again join an aging generation at the centotaphs on a cold November day. That will truly make Remembrance Day, a day for the celebration of freedom.

Willy Nywening is an English teacher who lives in Strathroy, Ont.

W.H. VOORTMAN LTD. ® TRADITIONAL FAMILY BAKING, QUALITY GUARANTEED

Voortman

Over 40 Varieties of Fine Cookies

Remembrance of what?

Heidi Vander Slikke

November. Dull and lifeless. As far as I was concerned you could cancel the whole month due to lack of interest. A pervasive chill in the air foreshadowed yet bleaker days to come. The smell of wet, burning leaves assailed my nostrils, adding to the gloom that assailed my thirteen-year-old heart. It seemed fitting that November should contain the most monumentally dreary holiday of the year, Remembrance Day. Remember? How could I remember something that I hadn't experienced?

PHOTOS, COURTESY HEIDI VANDERSLIKKE

Alfons Brutscher, the author's father, served in the German army during World War II. Born in 1922, he died of cancer in 1976.

It was an annual event. People and businesses plastered with paper poppies. And then there was that ubiquitous slogan: "Lest we forget." Forget what? I had nothing to forget. I'd have been happy just to understand, let alone forget. For instance, where did that resentment in my mother's voice come from when she'd talk about the war? But then, Remembrance Day seemed to have a strange effect on a lot of people.

Lady had retrieved the ball and wagged her tail expectantly as she dropped it at my feet. I obliged half-heartedly, thinking of how I'd survived yet another Remembrance Day assembly at school that morning. Once again I had endured the local war hero, his portly physique stuffed into a twenty-five-year-old uniform. I'd sat and watched this normally jovial businessman transform into a florid-faced, vitriolic zealot. With bulging eyeballs, in passionate tones he had ranted and raved, describing the entire German race as a "lean, mean, fighting machine; crazed with power..., bent on its absolutely evil course...." Then, painfully aware of my German heritage, I'd wished with all my heart that the earth would open up and swallow me whole.

Leaving the gym a classmate hissed in my direction, "Nazi pig!"

"Hey," another sneered, "Show a little respect for the 'Master Race,' will ya?" And a cacophony of ugly laughter propelled me back to the classroom.

Sighing aloud I patted Lady's silky head. "Lest we forget," I muttered, "I wish I could."

✝✝✝

It was almost dark now. The cold crept under my skin. Inside the house I hung up my jacket and kicked off my sneakers. Music wafted softly from the darkened living room. Old German folk songs. My mother sometimes made fun of them, wailing woefully as she mocked the emotional lyrics. But I knew if my father was listening to that record he was probably in his own world again.

Passing through the tidy kitchen, I called quietly, "Pa?" No answer came. Maybe he'd fallen asleep on the sofa. His days began at 5:30 a.m. I peeked around the doorway. No, he was awake. On one side of the room was the small orange light indicating the stereo was on. Dancing on the other side of the room was the small orange tip of my father's lit cigarette. I switched on the TV lamp, gently illuminating the scene.

I studied the familiar face, its ruddy features softened by the dim light. Eyes that were always as blue and as strong as steel at this moment were distant and burdened. Definitely in another world, I thought, as I cuddled up beside him. For a moment no words were exchanged, then he drew raggedly on the cigarette and butted it out as he exhaled.

"Watchaya' thinkin', Pa?" I ventured.

"Lessons in life, I guess." He paused, then continued, "No man should have to live through a war."

> **"We left him there to die — one way or the other. Sometimes in my worst nightmares I can still hear him groaning in pain."**

He told me of the day he vowed to leave Germany, no matter how the war ended. It happened after spending 26 hours in a trench, listening to his best friend slowly bleeding to death from a gunshot to his abdomen. The time came when they had to pull out. There was no hope for his friend. Knowing he'd be left behind, he begged my father to shoot him. "I wish I could have ended his misery. But all I could do was make sure his own gun was loaded and within reach. We left him there to die — one way or the other. Sometimes in my worst nightmares I can still hear him groaning in pain."" His voice quivered slightly, then he almost spit, "And I swore to God that day I'd find another country to live in; someplace where such things would never happen."

My father's face grew contemplative again. I was losing his presence. Patting his huge, calloused hand, I whispered, "It's all over now."

"For him it is," he countered, "But not for me. It'll never be over for me. I have to live with the bloody memories." He looked directly at me for the first time since I'd entered the room. "Do you know I once split a man's skull open?"

I flinched in shock, every fibre of my body registering the disbelief and repulsion.

"He was a Russian. I was chopping wood, and he came out of nowhere. He had a bayonet in his hand, headed straight for my chest. There was no time to think. In that instant I raised my axe up high over my head and brought it down as hard as I could on his skull."

The nicotine stained fingers trembled as they lit another Export. Pa swallowed hard and carried on, "I feel sick to my stomach when I think of him lying there, his brains bashed open. 'It was kill or be killed,' I tell myself. But he was no monster, Heidi. He was just a young man, lying there dead. Just a poor, scared bastard like me. His mother would never see her son again. And I killed him."

Now my father was searching my face, reading my reaction, tears in his eyes. I felt as if I could barely breathe. "You had no choice," I stammered.

"There is *always* a choice," he retorted, "And to this day I don't know if I made the right one." We sat there, side by side for a long time in silence.

Alfons Brutscher, second from right, a blacksmith by trade, served with the veterinary unit on the Russian front, 1943.

✝✝✝

As I lay in bed later that night, I shuddered at the thought of my father's "choice." Deeper still was the dread of the alternative consequences.

"There is *always* a choice." It's a statement that continues to haunt me, even as I sit in church these days, my eye caught by the inscription on the communion table: *THIS DO IN REMEMBRANCE OF ME.* How easy it would be to think: *Remembrance of what?*

Heidi Vander Slikke lives in Harriston, Ont.

HS Limited
Harry Snoek Limited
Real Estate Development & Investment
3 Bayview Forest Lane
Thornhill, Ontario L3T 7S4
Tel.: (905) 889-5300

At *Harry Snoek Limited we have had forty years of success in real estate investment and development. Over the years many have joined us, by lending money or by directly participating in land investments. We invite you to join as well.*

7¾%

To diversify our borrowing and to expand investment participation we pay very attractive interest rates, currently 7¾%. Call us for details about lending or investing. Your money is secure with us.

Sports

CC reflects changing Canadian CRC attitudes about sports, recreation

Marian Van Til

ST. CATHARINES, Ont. — Redeemer College physical education professor John Byl has surveyed 46 years-worth of *Christian Courier/Calvinist Contact* to find out how the paper has dealt with sports, dance, recreation, leisure and issues related to physical health (see accompanying story).

Byl looked at CC issues from 1950 through 1996, tallying and analyzing all stories, features, opinions pieces, letters and columns related to those subjects. Byl found around 400 such articles. He analyzed them for the frequency with which they occurred, subjects they covered, attitudes they expressed, and attitudes expressed by specific CC writers over time.

In 1950 many Dutch immigrants were settling in Canada, and leisure activity was not the first thing on their minds. Yet their new land offered almost unlimited opportunities for recreation and sports involvement. At first CC's focus was on enjoying the beautiful Canadian scenery and getting exercise, Byl found.

Byl concludes: "For most Dutch immigrants of this period, these photographs [of Banff, etc.] must have reaffirmed their dream that they had arrived in Paradise, even though few ... could actually experience the reality of Paradise by... enjoying holidays in Banff."

Holy Day, not holiday

However, "the youth appeared overly enthusiastic about enjoying Paradise, and some warnings were deemed necessary. In 1952 John Verbruggen, in a series of articles on the CRC Synod's 1951 decisions on worldly amusements, urged the young people to live carefully. "The Enemy confronts us in our work and play," he wrote (May 18, '52). He argued that we must choose between treating the Lord's Day as a holiday, in which we do our own pleasure, or as a holy day, in which we do the Lord's pleasure (Jan. 1, '52). And recreation should serve to "equip the Christian again for the better service in the Kingdom of God and for the performance of one's daily task" (June 1, '52)." Sundays were to be quiet days for reading and meditation. Sports were approved of, but not on Sundays.

By the time of Ad Otten's editorship (1954-59), CC had become a weekly tabloid. The emphasis was on Canada as vacationland, and on the encouragement of amateurism in sport.

In the nearly two decades under Dick Farenhorst's editorship there was less foment than one might expect. The "quiet Sunday," however, was under attack. At the same time, "the great Canadian outdoors was heralded," notes Byl. It was reported in June 1966 that camping had risen tenfold in the past decade; and fishing was considered a worthy activity.

There were many photographs depicting ski jumping, trampolining, skating, baseball, tobogganing, curling, boating, etc. Byl comments: "Though Dutch immigrants were sufficiently affluent to pursue some of these activities ... these photographs remained visual affirmations of the Canadian paradise the readers had immigrated to."

Reclaiming 'Paradise Lost'

Under Keith Knight's editorship, 1976-1983, the CC community "appears to have become increasingly active in sport, recreational activities and dance, but not always in a mature Christian manner," says Byl.

Knight began to "seriously address problems in church hockey and increasingly tried to get people to think about how they used their leisure time and holidays in ways that honored God."

Knight tried to combat legalism when it came to dance or sports on Sunday. He "wanted the world of sport, recreation and dance to be faithfully claimed for Christ, trying to redeem sport in Paradise lost," Byl concludes.

The dominant religion

Coverage of sport- and recreation-related topics again increased markedly over the years of Bert Witvoet's editorship, which began in 1983 and continues.

Byl concludes that Witvoet was critical of the "gods of professional sport, and valued good, clean sport played for the love of the game." Witvoet frequently warned against worshipping this aspect of contemporary culture. For instance, during the construction of Toronto's Skydome, he said the new, one-of-a-kind stadium "symbolizes the dominant religions of our time" (June 6, '89).

Witvoet was more encouraged by amateur sport, which could for Christians be a positive act of worship if it was participated in, Byl notes, "for the love of the game, for fun and not for money, [and] not with violence."

Witvoet extolled the value of camping but was less critical of smoking than were some other CC contributors and letter writers. In the late '80s he said he would not "make a big moral issue of what in the beginning is usually no more than a peer pressure activity." Others, however, seriously questioned its effect on our bodies as "temples of the Holy Spirit."

Monthly sports column appears

In 1991, CC began to run a monthly sports column, with John Byl himself as the columnist. Byl saw devotion to sport and health as potentially positive, but also warned readers not to be "swept up by the commercialization and greed for money and victory that often characterizes contemporary North American Sport."

Byl viewed both professional and amateur sport as ways to either worship or dishonor God, and wrote about a large variety of subjects.

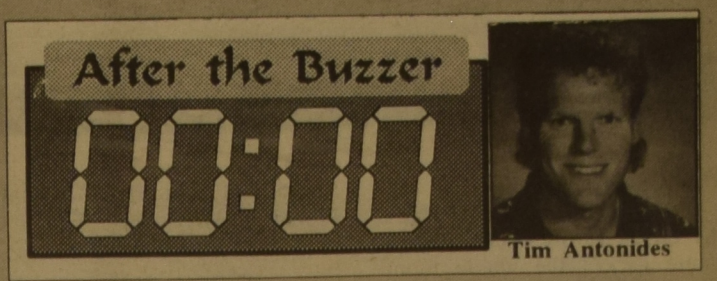
In addition to the sports column, other sports-related stories were published, a number written by associate editor Marian Van Til. Gradually, CC began to pay more attention to events like the Olympics (also as opportunities for evangelism), the Special Olympics, and to telling readers about specific professional athletes who were or had become Christians.

Also included were many more health-related stories, urging proper eating, exercise and so on. Van Til reviewed various sports-related movies and did stories on several Christian Reformed athletes who had exceptional talent, e.g., in baseball (Chris Reitsma) and cycling (Anne Samplonius).

In early 1995 Rob Janssens took over the monthly sports column. He had a blunt style designed to stir up discussion and perhaps controversy.

Byl ends his analysis there, before Tim Antonides took over in early 1997 as CC's sports columnist.

As reported in the p. 6 story, when Byl has completed his research he intends to compile his analysis of CC and a number of other Christian journals in a book.



Tim Antonides

How much do you love your body?

I'm getting married in March. I'm so crazy about Monica, I'd do anything for her. I've decided to do something I never thought I would: I'm going to lose weight.

I made a deal with the Grade 8 P.E. class that I teach. I will lose 10 pounds by the time March 14 rolls around or I owe them a pizza party (my idea, not hers). Why did I do this? I'm certainly not obese by any means, but I am getting a bit of a spare tire. I want to look fit, trim, and lean for Monica on our wedding day.

Self-image. I could write at great length about worship of the human body by modern North American culture and countless cultures before us. But it wouldn't exactly be a startling revelation to the reader. A more interesting and valuable question is this: How are we supposed to maintain our bodies in a way that glorifies God and yet keep them from turning physical fitness into an obsession? Is the deal I'm making with my Grade Eights just a cute disguise for what is essentially my own love of my body?

Taking care of what's ours

My mom keeps a clean, nicely decorated home. It's not extravagant or glitzy. It's well-taken care of and those who see it notice that it has been cared for. So too, I get my truck tuned up from time to time. I wash it. I change the oil. Sometimes I even scrub the roof, even though no one will ever see it. The truck is a possession that I've been blessed with and I want to take good care of it. As temples of the Spirit and creations of the Lord entrusted to us, our bodies deserve to be maintained and tuned even more so.

As always, sin enters the picture. Romans 1 slams this home: "They exchanged the truth of God for a lie, and worshipped and served created things rather than the Creator" (verse 25). My mom and dad can make their house an avenue through which to glorify themselves. My truck can give me a temporary measure of "coolness." Like everything, when it isn't tempered by moderation and sobriety, physical fitness can become an obsession and an object of worship.

What's the solution? We *can* adorn our bodies as temples of the Spirit. Some of us like to work-out with weights to see what our muscles can do. Some like to run to gain endurance and tone. I choose to play basketball and eat less so my future wife can be proud of how I'm treating my body. The aesthetic dimension of looking good is not inherently bad.

No dichotomy

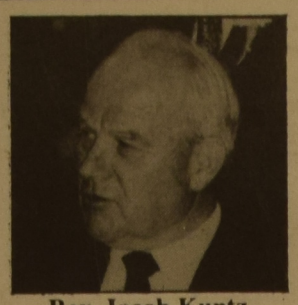
All the chocolate weight-loss shakes, rowing machines, and chin-up bars in the world can't hide the pivotal question, though: When people get heavily involved in physical fitness, is it being done to glorify their Lord through the use of their body or is it being done to glorify themselves?

Many of the ancient Greeks were wrong. There is no dichotomy of body and soul. You can't worship your body and lead a balanced life that puts the sovereignty of God at the forefront. The body, as a house for the Spirit, deserves the right treatment. As a creation, it is not to be worshipped more than the Creator.

How am I doing with my little deal with the Grade Eights? Not bad. I'm just making sure I don't look too good too fast! Self-worship is a dangerous thing, after all.

Tim Antonides teaches Grade 5 physical education and coaches at Surrey Christian School, Surrey, B.C.

Church press quotes



Rev. Jacob Kuntz

Public life and personal conviction

ChristianWeek *of September 23 informed us about Dianne Haskett, mayor of London, Ont., who was asked to issue a Pride Proclamation requested by the Homophile Association of London, Ont. She refused, saying that the practice of homosexuality conflicts with her evangelical Christian convictions. The matter has come before the Ontario Human Rights Tribunal in a complaint that her refusal to issue the proclamation violated the ban on discrimination.*

"The mayor expressed love and compassion for homosexuals, but affirmed that she could not approve the practice of homosexuality because of her religious beliefs.

"Asked why she could not divorce her private religious convictions from her public duties as mayor, an emotional Haskett replied, 'Frankly, I don't know how that's possible.... My spiritual life is tied up in my relationship with God. And to say at some point in time that I'm going to separate myself from that — I understand that some people can conceive of how to do that, but I can't conceive of how to do it. I think persons who separate themselves from their deeply held beliefs at the very least are [hypocritical]. At the very worst they're turning their back on God, and I can't do that."

"Following Haskett's testimony, London city councilor Megan Walker told *The London Free Press*, 'I understand that she broke down in tears, but there have been people crying and breaking down in tears since this began and I think it's time we gave some consideration to how those people feel.'

"In view of this controversy, Walker and Deputy Mayor Grant Hopcroft favor ending all city proclamations. Councilor Anne Marie DeCicco, a Roman Catholic who has helped the mayor organize an annual prayer breakfast for the city, fully backs Haskett. 'I think it takes a lot of courage,' said DeCicco, 'to stand up for something you believe in.'

"Tribunal adjudicator Mary Anne McKellar is expected to hand down her decision within the next few weeks."

Eulogies at funerals

It was to be expected that there would be an outpouring of sentiments in the church press about the deaths of Princess Diana and Mother Teresa. We will limit ourselves to two examples. The **Catholic Register** *of September 15 devoted much attention to Mother Teresa "who touched our lives." But in the issue of September 22 it made some sobering comments about Diana and her funeral in an article by Claudia Sommers. That funeral "showed too little of the Word of God."*

"The outpouring of grief for Princess Diana is undoubtedly sincere. But if, as a few lone voices have suggested, the public response to Diana's life and death has been one of genuine admiration mixed with less healthy elements of the cult of celebrity and postmodern emotionalism, the funeral itself would have been the appropriate place, in the presence of God, to put all of these reactions into their rightful order. As it happened, this was not really achieved.

"Diana's funeral was framed in Christian religious observances, but memories of it will be dominated by the words of personal eulogies, particularly those of her brother Charles, Earl Spencer.

"His anger and bitterness on his sister's behalf were undisguised. It was painful to witness, and it should never have taken place.

"The other eulogy of note was Elton John's performance of his rewritten 'Candle in the Wind.' Again, the tribute was heartfelt, but inadequate to the occasion and, ironically, to the person being celebrated. Diana was demeaned by a comparison with Marilyn Monroe, who, as far as we know, lived in a pathetic, self-absorbed cocoon; and, where Diana demonstrated passionate devotion to her children, Marilyn aborted all of hers.

"Elton John's words were as vapid as Earl Spencer's were biting, and both were better left to some other place and time. There was no better evidence of this than that the bulk of the congregation, suffering the common confusion of our times over the difference between religious ritual and theatrical performance, engaged in wholly inappropriate applause after both tributes.

"I hope that the principal figures in Diana's world — her sons — took solace from the funeral service, but if at the end of the day they felt nearly as empty as they did at the beginning, I would not be surprised. For my taste there was too little of the Word of God, and far too much of the struggling words of mere men."

Other comments came in an editorial in the October issue of* Anglican Journal, *in which Diana was praised for her humanitarian work.

"In short, she took on an increasing amount of work as a servant; like Mother Teresa, the traditional work of deacons.

"But Diana also lived in a fairy tale turned soap opera, with bubbles bursting everywhere: betrayed in marriage, by lovers, by her in-laws, by herself. She fell into eating disorders and sought counsel in the absurd, in astrology and New Age distractions. She manipulated and was manipulated.

"And the world watched in close fascination, participating vicariously in her life as she alternately strutted and stumbled on life's stage.

"Diana apparently found no solace in the church and the church [in the funeral service] provided little solace for the world. The service was barely Anglican, despite recent comments from the Dean of Westminster, claiming its form was the basic funeral rite. It encouraged wallowing in self-pity. And Lord Spencer's remarks were the best reason one could give for why the church traditionally denied eulogies. He spoke of Diana as not needing sainthood; her human imperfection was greater than the near perfection of a saint, her good works sufficient to save herself and others.

"Diana was no saint. Like many, she did much good. Indeed, she set an example for us of how someone with worldly riches (i.e., most Canadians, by any standard) can share Mammon and love.

"She challenged us, as did Mother Teresa. But where Mother Teresa knew the course of good and love, Diana seemed lost.

"Is it cynical to think the church failed her in life and us in her death? We are in no position to judge these two lives except to give thanks to God for the love he showed us through them.

"God alone knows the secrets of our hearts."

Ethics and the church

In his "Personal Opinion" (**Mennonite Brethren Herald,** *Sept. 12) Dr. John Redekop sums up several ethical decisions of his church in the past that have never been formally rescinded. Some examples: "That our members stay away from circuses, theatres and such other places" (1887); "That it be decided unanimously that our members should not carry life insurance policies" (1897); "That the cutting of hair by our sisters is in direct contradiction with the Word of God as found in 1 Cor. 11:6" (1927); "That no firearms are to be permitted in our families" (1893). All these and others are reason to encourage the church to take its role in ethical matters seriously and to "revise our ethics."*

"Unfortunately, the Christian church all too often abdicates its role in ethical matters by doing nothing. Out-of-date or faulty statements of the past are not revised, and little or no guidance is given for present or future behavior. Such a stance of doing nothing does not, of course, mean that things don't change. They do change, often drastically, but not because the faithful church provides leadership. At times, a revised stance does appear, but in many instances it appears only when a new majority supports a fundamental change in the ethical issue involved.

"Such a response is inadequate — for several reasons. First, it indicates an abdication of leadership. Second, it indicates an unwillingness to learn from the past, to correct earlier errors, to spell out better understanding of Scripture and to explain new understandings of certain kinds of behavior. Third, it suggests that those who claim to be in touch with God must depend on societal trends to determine right and wrong. Fourth, it falsely suggests the lack of an independent and over-arching Christian ethical framework. Fifth, it reduces respect for the church and its policies. Sixth, it creates confusion about what the Bible teaches.

"So what should be done? The following should be considered. We need to acknowledge the need for a better way of dealing with past and present ethical dilemmas. Our conference leadership should appoint a task force or commission of competent and respected individuals to identify our ethical 'blue laws,' to suggest how best to deal with them and to provide guidelines with how to deal with future ethical issues concerning which the Bible is not explicit. Such a group could also teach us how to distinguish between absolute and situation-based ethical concerns (cf. 1 Cor. 6:12; 8:7-13).

"It is difficult to speak with authority while simultaneously acknowledging human fallibility, but in a covenant community, where trust is strong, it can and must be done. Integrity and credibility require it."

Jacob Kuntz is a retired Christian Reformed minister who lives in Brampton, Ont., where he works as a part-time chaplain in Holland Christian Homes.

Classifieds

Classified Rates

(Revised February 1, 1995)

Births $25.00
Marriages & Engagements $40.00
Anniversaries $45.00
2-column anniversaries . $90.00
Obituaries $45.00
Notes of thanks $35.00
Birthdays $40.00

All other one-column classified advertisements: $15.00 per column inch. NOTE: Minimum fee is $15.00. Letter under file number $35.00 extra. Photos: $25.00 additional charge.

Note: All rates shown above are GST inclusive

ATTENTION!

a) *Christian Courier* reserves the right to print classifieds using our usual format.,

b) A sheet with information about an obituary sent by funeral homes is *not* acceptable since it leads to errors and confusion.

c) Photographs sent by fax *are not* acceptable. If you wish a photo included, send us the original.

d) *Christian Courier* will not be responsible for any errors due to handwritten or phoned-in advertisements.

e) The rate shown above for classifieds covers any length up to five column inches. *Christian Courier* reserves the right to charge for additional column inches at the rate of $15.00 per column inch (GST incl.).

NEWLYWEDS & NEW PARENTS

We offer a one-year subscription for only $25.00 (GST incl.) to the couples whose wedding is announced in the *Christian Courier* and to the parents of the child whose birth announcement appears in our paper. To facilitate matters, we encourage those who request the wedding or birth announcement to enclose $25.00 and the couple's correct address.

Christian Courier
4-261 Martindale Rd.
St. Catharines, ON L2W 1A1
Phone: (905) 682-8311
Fax: (905) 682-8313

Teachers

KITCHENER, Ont.: Laurentian Hills Chr. School invites applications for a maternity leave situation during the 1997/98 school year. A **full-time Grade 2 classroom teacher position** for all subjects including French. This position to commence early to mid-February. Interested parties may reply with C.V. to:

Mr. Luke Janssen, Principal
Laurentian Hills Chr. School
11 Laurentian Dr.
Kitchener, ON N2E 1C1

Thank You

JONKER:

"A WARM THANK YOU"

Having received uncountable tokens of sympathy with the passing away of my husband
Rev. Peter M. Jonker
and unable to answer you all personally, I express in this way my sincere thanks to all of you!
Alida Jonker
and family.

Anniversaries

1972 November 24 1997

"Sing to the Lord a new song, for He has done marvellous things..." (Ps. 98:1a).

With praise and thanksgiving to God, we are very happy to announce the 25th wedding anniversary of our parents, grandparents and great-grandparents

ARIE and HILDA HOOGENBOOM
(nee TENDAM)

Leonard Hoogenboom — Elmvale, Ont.
Wilma Hoogenboom — Richmond Hill, Ont.
Letty & John McNeil — Maple, Ont.
Eddy Hoogenboom — Richmond Hill, Ont.
Irene Hoogenboom — Richmond Hill, Ont.
Peggy De Vries — Sherwood Park, Alta.
Paul & Karen Hoogenboom — Woodville, Ont.
Mark & Coline Hallink — Cambridge, Ont.
Sam Hoogenboom — Richmond Hill, Ont.

and 17 grandchildren.

Raymond & Marj De Boer — Stoney Creek, Ont.
Peter & Karen De Boer — Jarvis, Ont.
Margaret & Jake Helder — Jarvis, Ont.
Tina & Leo Van Tuyl — Wellandport, Ont.
Trish & John Nie — Waterford, Ont.
Susan & George Theodorou — Dunnville, Ont.
Betty & Jim Dunnett — Townsend, Ont.

20 grandchildren, and two with Jesus, and four great-grandchildren.

Open house will be held on Saturday, Nov. 22, 1997, at the Ebenezer Chr. Ref. Church (Hwy. #3E), Jarvis, Ont., from 2-4 p.m.

Best wishes only please.

Home address: R.R. #3, Jarvis, ON N0A 1J0.

Look for our Calendar of Events on page 18...

Anniversaries

Essex Kitchener
1957 November 23 1997

JOHN and CORRIE LAMMERS
(nee SCHINKEL)

"The eternal God is our refuge and underneath are the everlasting arms" (Deut. 33:27).

With praise and thanksgiving to God we hope to celebrate with our parents and grandparents their 40th wedding anniversary.

Joanne & Jim Zwygers — Alliston, Ont.
Jeremy, Steven, Christopher
Sylvia & Ken Breuker — Victoria, B.C.
Ryan, Danelle & Yvonne (twins), Lauren
Helen & Richard Steinmann — Phillipsburg, Ont.
Christina, David, Alana, Heather
Karen Lammers & Brian (friend) — Kitchener, Ont.
Jillian Asker, Nicholas
Gary & Sylvia Lammers — Kitchener, Ont.

Welcome to family and friends to an open house on Saturday, Nov. 22, 1997, from 2-5 p.m., at Laurentian Hills Chr. School, corner of Westmount and Laurentian Drive.

1957 November 16 1997
Hamilton Hamilton

"But the mercy of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting on those who fear Him, and His righteousness to children's children" (Ps.103:17).

With praise and thanksgiving to our heavenly Father, we are pleased to announce the 40th wedding anniversary of our parents and grandparents

HEIDI and JERRY MEIJAARD
(nee MUYS)

We are grateful to God for His faithfulness and mercy in the years of their marriage. We are confident of His leading and guiding in the future.

Tyler & Alma Meijaard
Michael, Melissa, Christina, Scott, Adam

Home address: 11 Harrisford Street, Unit 46, Hamilton, ON L8K 6L7

St. Catharines Rexdale
Ont. Ont.
1957 November 16 1997

In thankfulness for God's steadfast love, we are happy to announce the 40th wedding anniversary of our parents and grandparents

JAKE and TERESA RUMPH
(nee VAN MINNEN)

We thank them for their love and support. We pray that God will bless them and us with many more years together.

Debbie & Harold Knor — Hamilton
Brian, Karen, Amy, Wendy
David & Nancy Rumph — Hamilton
Jessica
Edward Rumph — Cookstown
Cynthia & John Veldhoen — Belleville

Home address: 11 Latonia Drive, Rexdale, ON M9W 2J1

Anniversaries

1957 1997
Wallaceburg St. Catharines

Psalm 84:11

On Nov. 8, 1957, the Lord promised to be "a sun and shield" to us

GORDON and MARY SPIERING
(nee DIJKSTRA)

Now 40 years later we can truly say that God has kept His promise and has indeed been the source of love, hope and joy in our lives!

And together with our children we praise God for what He has been in our family and trusting that He will continue to be with us in the time ahead.

Debbie & Cees Van Vliet — Aalsmeer, the Neth.
Caroline Spiering — St. Catharines, Ont.
Ron & Rhonda Spiering — St. Catharines, Ont.
Leah
Carl & Helena Spiering — Jordan Station, Ont.
Lisa, Monica
Mark & Tiffany Spiering — Vineland, Ont.

Open house, D.V., at the Covenant Chr. Ref. Church, St. Catharines, Ont., on Nov. 15, 1997, from 2-5 p.m.

Home address: 35 Gordon Place, St. Catharines, ON L2M 2A4

Brantford Scarborough
1957 November 15 1997

"For the Lord is good and his love endures forever. His faithfulness endures for all generations" (Ps.100:5).

With joy and thanksgiving to God we are pleased to announce the 40th wedding anniversary of our parents and grandparents

GEORGE and GERDA VAN DYK
(nee BRUS)

We pray for the Lord's continued blessings in the years to come.

With love from:
Bill & Nancy Van Dyk
Stephanie, Katelyn
John & Charlene Van Dyk
Kurt, Camille
Jim Van Dyk
Joanne & Derrick Lycklama
Evan, Renee, Colin
Ingrid Van Dyk

Home address: 12 Pitfield Rd., Agincourt, ON M1S 1X7

Interested in placing an ad. Call us for details.

Obituaries

1943 1997
Katlijk Hampton
the Neth. Ont.

Romans 8:37-39

Surprised by glory in his sleep, our beloved husband and father

HENDRIK VEENSTRA

went to be with his Lord on Oct. 11, 1997.

Married in 1970, he became father to three children, and a son-in-law. He was anticipating with excitement and joy the birth of his first grandchild, to be born in January.

Coby Van Duyvenvoorde-Veenstra — Hampton
Jessica & Paul Brooks — St. Catharines
Len — Hampton
Mark — Hampton

Correspondence address:
Box 133, Hampton, ON L0B 1J0

Wanted

Wanted: The **blue "Psalter Hymnal"** used in the Christian Reformed churches. Copyright 1976, published by the Board of Publications of the Chr. Ref. Church, Grand Rapids, Mich. Would like up to 75 copies, any condition. Contact **Robert Greenfield at (519) 538-1553 or fax at (519) 538-5477.**

For Rent

Cottage for rent

in scenic **Holten** (Holland).
Contact: **Andy Borger**
(905) 623-6049.

For rent for the month of November and December in Sugar Creek Resort, **Bradenton**, Fl., our **park unit with Florida room**. $150 US per week, plus electricity.
Call (905) 774-8429.

Travel

Florida: Join a tour for Christian seniors, Jan. 6-24, 1998, to a beachfront resort with kitchenette, at Treasure Island. Fully escorted and tour includes trips to local attractions. For more information call **John Feddes at (905) 627-7874.**

Classifieds

Church News

Christian Reformed Church

Calls accepted:
— to Iron Springs, Alta., **Rev. John H. Noordhof** of Dresden, Ont.

— to Trinity, Edmonton, Alta., **Candidate Colin Vander Ploeg** (the installation took place on Sunday, Oct. 19, 1997)

Attention: All churches. Please inform us of important changes. Items under "Church News" will be included free of charge.

For Sale

SJOELBAKKEN
Dutch Shuffleboards, hardwood, heavy duty. $135, shipping, taxes incl., Can. & U.S.A.
D. & J. Koomans
R.R. #3, Chatham, ON N7M 5J3
(519) 351-7667

Personal

ONE TO ANOTHER
Christian companion magazine. Hundreds of readers Canada-wide. Single issue $5.
Write to:
#12 923 2nd Ave. S.
Lethbridge, AB T1J 0C7

Teachers

OKANAGAN NORTH: The Vernon Chr. School, a parent operated school, is a diverse Christian community providing education to more than 200 students in Kindergarten to Grade 8. Currently, applications are being accepted for the position of **PRINCIPAL** for the **1998-99 year**. Send resumes to:

Vernon Chr. School
6890 Pleasant Valley Road
Vernon, BC V1B 3R5
Attention: Mr. Cliff Welfing
Board Chairperson.

ADA REALTY LTD.
2011-137 Ave., Suite 404
Edmonton, AB
T5A 4W2
(403) 473-8149
Sid Vandermeulen
Contact us first when you think of moving to Edmonton and district.

Het vertrouwde adres.

Miscellaneous

Pineview Home for Seniors

1310 Exmouth Street, Sarnia, ON N7S 3X9

Come and enjoy a pleasant, safe and friendly community in beautiful Bluewater land. Very close to First and Second Christian Reformed churches with audio hook-up to both churches in each apartment. Close to malls and public transportation at the door. One-bedroom apartments available for immediate occupancy.

For information call:
Henry Van Barneveld at (519) 845-3232
Corrie Speelman at (519) 336-3815

Were you an immigrant kid?

Were you 8-18 when you came to Canada between 1947 and 1959? Would you fill out a questionnaire for a book about the Dutch immigrant child experience? Please write:
Anne van Arragon Hutten, 161 Thorpe Road, Kentville, NS B4N 3V7 or phone: (902)-678-7088.

Ministry Opportunity

Impacting Young People for Christ

Youth for Christ has several full-time and part-time positions available. Youth for Christ staff have a sense of missionary calling to reach youth, to build teams of people who will join them, and to connect ministry and its results to the work of a local church. Presently there are positions available in **Strathroy**, **Tillsonburg** and **Woodstock**, Ont. For inquiries contact:
Mr. Steve Deller, Executive Director at Quad County Youth for Christ, (519) 537-5219 or fax (519) 537-6744.

Attractive Investment

1 year: 5.5 %
2 years: 6.5%
5 years: 7.0 %

Successful real estate partnership for 17 years seeks private investment loans.
$10,000 minimum.

Contact our Chartered Accountant
John Vleeming, C.A.
325 Estate Dr., Sherwood Park, AB T8B 1L8
Phone: (403) 449-6143
Fax: (403) 417-2075

Miscellaneous

Attention: All CC Subscribers

Treat yourself to a new CD of great choral music by making someone a subscriber. Please hurry! The supply of **free** CDs is limited.

This is the time to subscribe to North America's only Reformed weekly newspaper. If you gain a new subscription for us, we will reward you by sending you the new, just released, **Liberation Choir CD (#2)** featuring the 170-voice choir, conducted by **Willem van Suydam**, organist **Martin Mans**, and soprano **Colleen Greidanus**. The concert was recorded in Holy Trinity Anglican Church, Toronto, Ont.

COUPON

Send this coupon to us and enclose a cheque or money order for **$43.50** (or **$35 US**), payable to *Christian Courier*.

Name (new subscriber)

Address **Town/City** **Code:**

Please send CD to:

Name (present subscriber)

Address **Town/City** **Code**

Note:
* This offer is not valid for subscription renewals.
* Cheque/money-order must be enclosed with this coupon.
* Offer valid as long as supply lasts.
* Only one CD per subscriber.

Send to:
Christian Courier, 4-261 Martindale Rd., St. Catharines, ON L2W 1A1

Classifieds

Miscellaneous	Teachers	Job Opportunities	Miscellaneous

VISIT TURKEY & GREECE

Follow the footsteps of the apostles! Join us on this 15-day, spiritually-enriching journey through cities and towns visited by Paul and other apostles.

When?
End of March — April 1998

Tour hosts:
Pastor Jack and Alice Hielema

Cost: $3,795 p.p. from Toronto (all-inclusive). Save **$300** if registering before November 30, 1997.

Phone: (250) 964-8142
Fax: (250) 964-8144

DCA Travel — Holland Travel Professional
Toronto 416-224-5211
Toll-Free (Canada wide)
1-800-667-2525
Fax 416-224-0842
Grimsby 905-945-3301
Burlington 905-522-8602
Emergency Service Available
Business & Vacation Travel

The Living Word
Sermons for reading services.
CRC
Contact:
R. Vander Ploeg Secr./Treas.
37 Brick Pond Lane
Woodstock, ON N4V 1G1
Phone: (519) 539-2117

Listowel Christian School

invites applications for a **full-time teaching administrator** for the 1998-1999 school year. Expect 50% teaching-50% administrative time. Principal or vice-principal experience would be an asset. Listowel is a K-8 elementary school of approx. 120 students, 3 full-time and 4 part-time staff. It is interdenominational, representing 13 churches in the area.
Please send resumes to:

Principal Search Committee
c/o Menno Eelkema
Listowel Christian School
Box 151
Listowel, ON N4W 3H2
Fax/Phone: (519) 291-3086

Will & Estate Planning
can help
BIBLE DISTRIBUTION

For complete information call or write:

THE BIBLE LEAGUE
P.O. Box 5037
Burlington, ON L7R 3Y8
Tel.:(905) 319-9500
Fax: (905) 319-0484

Evangelistic Materials in Arabic
Also, in English,
The Bible and Islam
$5.95 Canada/**$4.95** U.S.
and a folder of essays on Understanding the Middle East ($1.50).
Write:
The Back to God Hour
P.O. Box 5070
Burlington, ON L7R 3Y8

DORDT COLLEGE

REGISTRAR

The position is vacant as the result of the tragic death of Douglas M. Eckardt. Responsibilities include such areas as academic advising; planning, organizing, and managing a computer-based information system for student registration and records.
Qualifications:
Candidates with a graduate degree and experience in academia as faculty or administrator are preferred. Position available as early as January 1. Actual beginning date is flexible. To receive application materials, qualified persons committed to a Reformed, biblical perspective and educational philosophy are encouraged to send a curriculum vitae and a letter of interest which provides evidence of that commitment to:

Dr. Rockne McCarthy
Dordt College
498 4th Ave. NE
Sioux Center, IA 51250-1697
facsimile: 712-722-4496
e-mail: vpaa@dordt.edu

Dordt College is an equal opportunity institution and strongly encourages applications from women, minorities, and disabled persons.

HealthSelect™

Mutual of Omaha, the pioneer in Canadian Travel Insurance, offers **HealthSelect™** *- the Emergency Travel Medical Protection Plan that provides travel security worldwide.*

• Emergency assistance anywhere in the world with **Mutual of Omaha Assist** - *24 hours a day!*
• Comprehensive coverage • Unparalleled customer service
• Affordable rates • No membership fee

Call Now!
To purchase HealthSelect™ Emergency Travel Medical Insurance.
VERSTRAETE TRAVEL & CRUISES
Toronto (416) 969-8100 • St. Catharines (905) 934-4414
ONT. REG. # 03367728
Mutual of Omaha Insurance Company

Please take advantage of our monthly Business Directory. For a low cost of $25 (plus 7% G.S.T.) you can advertise your business.

Events

Calendar of Events

Please submit only brief items. Placement is subject to space availability. Lengthy, multiple-event announcements will be rejected. We reserve the right to edit the material and to charge a nominal, per issue fee per item inserted.

Nov. 8-9 Fortieth anniversary of the Immanuel CRC, **Simcoe**, Ont. Banquet and program on Saturday. Special worship service at 10 a.m. on Sunday. Info.: (519) 583-2476 (#)

Nov. 9 Dutch worship service led by Rev. R. Praamsma, 3 p.m., CRC, **Ancaster**, Ont.

Nov. 15 Concert by the "Crusaders Male Choir," with various instrumental selections, 7:30 p.m., First CRC, **Barrie**, Ont. Tickets at the door.

Nov. 15 York Music Fest, a concert featuring Willem Van Suijdam on the new Content organ, the Adoramus-Maranatha Choir, soprano Jody O'Hara, and pianist Paul De Boer. Audience participation. At 8 p.m., Maranatha CRC, King St., **York**, Ont. Tickets/Info.: (905) 765-6124 or 765-4244.

Nov. 16 Frisian worship service led by Rev. John D. Hellinga, 3 p.m., Chr. Ref. Church, **Mt. Brydges**, Ont. Info.: (519) 264-2362 (#).

Nov. 16 Special worship service in celebration of the 40th anniversary of the CRC, **Burnaby**, B.C., at 10:30 a.m. Coffee/dessert social on Nov. 15. All welcome! (#)

Nov. 21 J.S. Bach's "Magnificat" and other selected works will be performed by the RC Concert Choir, accompanied by orchestra, at Redeemer College, **Ancaster**, Ont. Don't miss this! Info./tickets: (905) 648-2131.

Nov. 22 Giant bazaar, 10 a.m.-9 p.m., Calvin Memorial Chr. School, 300 Scott St., **St. Catharines**, Ont. Children's games, baked goods, crafts and plants. Lunch, tea, supper are served. Fashion show at 2 p.m. Auction at 7 p.m. Info.: (905) 641-8872.

Nov. 22 "Finding the Light" conference on abuse, from 8:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m., East CRC, **Strathroy**, Ont. Keynote speaker: Beth Swagman. Info.: (519) 245-0253 or 245-0139.

Dec. 4-6 The RC Theatre Arts Dept. presents its fall mainstage production of "Scrooge... and other Yuletide Yarns," directed by Kip Edinborough Longstaff. At Redeemer College, **Ancaster**, Ont. **Dec. 4-5:** 7:30 p.m.; **Dec. 6:** 2 p.m. and 7:30 p.m. Info./tickets: (905) 648-2131.

Dec. 7 "Nederlandse Kerstzangdienst," 7:30 p.m., Emmanuel Ref. Church, 170 Clarke St. N., **Woodstock**, Ont. Youth service will be held Dec. 14, 7:30 p.m. Info.: (519) 537-6422 (#)

Dec. 14 Dutch worship service led by Rev. J. Groen, 3 p.m., CRC, **Ancaster**, Ont.

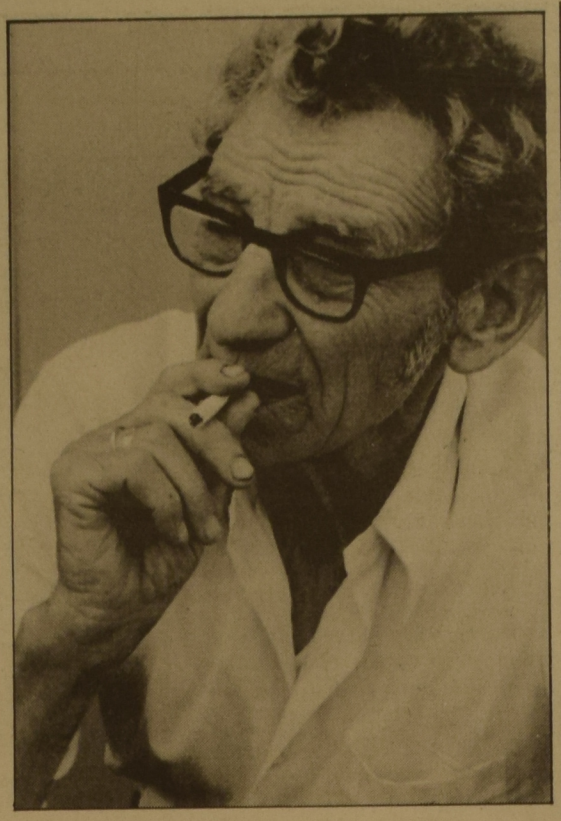
Congratulations!

The council and congregation of the Second Chr. Ref. Church, Brampton, Ont., congratulates
Pastor Peter Van Egmond
on his 40th anniversary of his ordination to the ministry in the CRC. We are grateful for his service to the churches he has served, particularly for his ministry to the aged at Holland Christian Homes during the last 10 years.
We hope to celebrate the anniversary with an open house on Saturday, ***Nov. 15, 1997,*** *from* ***2-4 p.m.****, at Holland Christian Homes. We wish Pastor and Mrs. Van Egmond God's blessings for the future.*

In Memoriam

Cornelis Vander Veen, born on Sept. 13, 1904, was a baker in Franeker, the Netherlands, and a church custodian in Rexdale, Ont. He died in Brampton, Ont., on Sept. 17 this year. One of the former young people at Second Chr. Ref. Church, Alice Kooy (nee Glas) lovingly remembers the friendly koster *who always thought that people were more important than a church building.*

Remembering Heit



A thin, wiry man
with
a happy grin
always approachable
ready to talk
or
share a joke.

In his prime he cared for our church
(he always cared for The Church)
and
dutifully did what was expected of him,
swept, mopped, scrubbed and vacuumed.
But to me he was a friend,
always there,
usually in the kitchen
making coffee for us.

Us, being the young people of that church,
meeting on a Thursday night
debating heavy theological points:
the Canons of Dort
Calvin's Institutes
the fourteen modalities

At break time he talked
and
laughed with us.
Thinking back now, he must have often thought,
"You kids have a lot to learn yet"
but
he never let on,
and instead,
would
encourage us,
listen to us,
care for us.

We used the church heavily.
Socials were held
on
Saturday nights,
but
he never complained about
the mess,
or the lateness of the hour.
He was on our side.

As my friend
he
would drive me home
often
on a Thursday night.
I
preferred this man
to
the boys
who offered their cars.

We would talk
about
our families (he knew mine well),
the church,
the next young people's outing,
or
just sit quietly.
With a friendly
"Greetings to the parents!"
we
would wave goodbye to each other.

Out of his prime,
later,
he took it upon
himself
to push my mother's wheelchair
to
various activities
in the senior's home
they
shared.

Well out of his prime,
much later,
we met again.

We, the young people of that earlier time,
decided
to hold a reunion.

Yes,
He
was the guest of honor.
Heit
received a standing ovation
and
a bouquet of flowers,
merely tokens of our
love
for him.

Heit, we, I, will
remember you,
and
God, please bless his dear wife,
Appie
and
their children.

Alice Kooy (Glas)

Pregnant teenagers find refuge at Rehoboth

COURTESY REHOBOTH GIRLS' HOME OF REFUGE AND SUPPORT

Rehoboth's inviting support house, opened 1995.

Marian Van Til

SPRINGFIELD, Ont. — Rehoboth Girls' Home of Refuge in Springfield, Ont., has been trying to foster pregnant young women's personal growth and sense of self-worth since it was founded in 1988. It does that by affirming each of its young clients' "value as a special and unique human being created in God's image," according to the home's policies and procedures manual.

Rehoboth is an interdenominational Christian ministry licensed by the Ontario Ministry of Community and Social Services. The home's financial support comes from churches, women's, men's and youth groups, service clubs and individuals.

Security and warmth for mother and child.

Supported independence

The home opened a support house in 1995 which offers prenatal programs for up to 10 pregnant young women, and post-natal programs as well. The housing provides a place for young women who wish to live semi-independently but who need support and have little or no other support means.

Many of the clients are fleeing abusive relationships or are in conflict about their pregnancies. "Many come because their family or boyfriend has been encouraging them to have an abortion," says managing director Jackie Hughes in a press release. And some come "with their family's blessing so that they can make informed decisions."

Rehoboth allows them to do that by providing a peaceful environment in which they have time to think and re-evaluate matters relating to themselves and their babies.

Crucial information

Programs at both of Rehoboth's locations include weekly Christian fellowship opportunities and outings, and life-skills classes which provide crucial information on health and nutrition, parenting and adoption.

Since many clients are high school aged they are encouraged to keep attending school or to pursue their education through correspondence courses. Post-secondary residents are urged to work as community volunteers during their stay.

Referrals to Rehoboth come from a variety of social service agencies, churches, doctors, right-to-life groups and Christian crisis pregnancy centres. A quarterly newsletter which is mailed to supporting individuals and delivered in bulk to area churches keeps people informed about what's happening at Rehoboth and encourages people "to become part of this important ministry which cares for the physical, emotional and spiritual needs of the moms and babies."

For more information contact Rehoboth at (519) 765-4207.

Remembrance Day

Learning more about life

PHOTOS COURTESY WENDY VAN DYK

Art Van Dyk (white helmet), the author's father-in-law, poses with other members of the Dutch resistance in Heerlen, Limburg, which was already liberated in 1944.

Wendy Van Dyk

Our children's grandparents are an important part of their lives. When we take our sons and daughter to visit them, we know that Opa and Oma have a wealth of love to give them — not to mention hugs, kisses and cookies. Once the cookies have been consumed and the hugs and kisses endured, the boys will go on to their favorite topic.

"What was the war like, Opa?"

"I hope you never know," Opa always says.

This does not mean that the boys will stop asking. Eventually Opa will tell them his stories. Mostly, they are the same.

When Opa was sheltering in a stronghold, a hand grenade was thrown in. Opa threw it out.

When he was arrested in Overschie on suspicion of being with the Dutch Underground, the arresting officers didn't find Opa's secret papers. Opa had hidden them underneath the doormat that the officers were standing on.

When Opa was on house-to-house search in Waubach, he heard breathing from behind a curtain, flipped his rifle off safety, moved the curtain aside — and captured a lager, pink pig.

Once in a while, Oma would add something to the stories. "It was awful," she would say. "You couldn't get anything. Once, I biked with Opa's sister to the farms to get some food."

The boys would ask me for more details on the way home. How was I supposed to know? I referred them to their father. He didn't know either.

✝ ✝ ✝

So once, when we visited, I asked Opa to write down his remembrances of the war. His writing gave us a different understanding of his stories; of the time that he and Oma had lived through. When his memories were fleshed out with more detail, they became heart-stopping moments in the maelstrom of confusion that was their life.

The time he threw the hand grenade out of the stronghold? It was thrown in by enemy troops which had bombed the airfield at Rotterdam where he was stationed. After they had landed they took the airfield and then took prisoners. Opa was one of the prisoners.

The secret papers that the arresting officers were standing on when they came to take Opa away? If they had found the papers they would have had proof that he was in the Underground and he would have been shot. Instead he was imprisoned, interrogated, and after 2 1/2 months was set free.

"What was the war like, Opa?"
"I hope you never know," Opa always says.

The pig? It was just a pig, and it made a wonderful meal for Opa and his men, and the men from the 9th American Army, who Opa just happened to be stationed with. But if the pig had been the sniper Opa had thought it was, it would have been a different story.

✝ ✝ ✝

Oma's story amazes me just as much as Opa's, but for different reasons.

"Once I biked with Opa's sister to the farms to get some food," she would say. I would imagine a bike ride with the family.

Art Van Dyk and his future wife, Riet, celebrate their engagement in May 1945.

But her bike ride was a trip of 150 km in a convoy of bikers which was fired on from the air. People at the back of the line were hit. Later, the barn they slept in was raided by a patrol looking for men to take back to the workcamps. Not your regular bike ride with the family.

As an adult, I can barely comprehend the conditions they lived in, the hardships they endured, the fear that was their constant companion. As an adult, I am just beginning to understand a very little of how war shaped their lives. As a member of their family, I feel gifted that they entrusted some of these details to us.

I also think I understand why it was so difficult to get even part of their story. How do you tell it? How to explain? As Opa says, "You have to live it before you can understand it."

Our boys have read some of the things Opa wrote down. When they get to the parts about the guns and tanks, they say, "Opa's a dude." They do not understand.

✝ ✝ ✝

As a parent, I know that our children have to learn about life. They need to live the life God has given them. I have resigned myself to the fact that our children will learn about things that I would just as soon they didn't.

But after reading Opa's story, after reading Oma's story, I understand just a little of what their life in the war was like. Even that small understanding is enough to make me agree with what Opa always says.

"What was the war like, Opa?"

"I hope you never know."

Wendy Van Dyk (Spoelstra) lives in Millgrove, Ont.

News Digest

'Diana effect' hits British retailers

LONDON, Eng. (AP) — The gloom that gripped Britain after the death of Princess Diana was a big blow for the country's retailers, who suffered the biggest monthly drop in consumer spending in more than six years. British government statistics show that while florists, book-stores and record dealers enjoyed windfall sales, most other merchants were hammered by what economists are calling "the Diana effect." It added up to a 1.9 per cent drop in consumer spending from August to September. This effect is similar to what happened to American stores after the Kennedy assassination in 1963.

102-year-old graduates

SAN JUAN, Puerto Rico — Eighty-six years after quitting school to take a job in a silent movie theatre, Ana Molina Osorio became a high school graduate in October at the age of 102. The great-great-grandmother said she wanted her diploma so she could work at a local preschool, reports Reuters news service.

Osorio was the oldest in a group of elderly students who received their high school diplomas last month after taking graduate-equivalency classes though the Golden Club, a senior citizens' group at the housing project where they live.

'World' is a cruise ship

OSLO, Norway — Footloose millionaires who enjoy life at sea will soon have a chance to live out their life's dream. Cruise-ship maverick Knut Kloster Jr. is developing a ship called *The World* which will contain luxury condominiums for those able to afford a minimum price-tag of $1.2 million.

The ship will cost at least $400 million to build, but Kloster hopes to have enough clients signed up by the end of the year to allow him to start construction. Some of his prospective clients are retirees, but the average age of those who have signed up so far is 50, says Kloster. He is looking for discreet, run-of-the-mill millionaires such as CEOs, bankers and heirs. Celebrities like Madonna and Tom Cruise need not apply.